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# John Ford: the Temple and the Stage. (Volumes I and II).

Howard Lee Ford

*Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College*

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JOHN FORD: THE TEMPLE AND THE STAGE

VOLUME I

A Dissertation

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Howard Lee Ford

B.A., North Texas State University, 1959

M.A., North Texas State University, 1960

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## ABSTRACT

John Ford: The Temple and the Stage considers all the works of John Ford in an attempt to defend the dramatist against charges of moral decadence and to relate his life and art to the contemporary milieu. The study begins with a summary of Ford's life and an examination of the major historical events and movements of his time. Following this background material, each work, taken in chronological order, is examined for its own particular interests or problems, with some notice given to Ford's development as an artist. The study concludes that Ford is not a moral decadent and that he has much more to do with real life than has generally been supposed.

The chapters on Ford's life and certain political and social factors in the age produce enough evidence regarding Ford's relationship with many of the major figures of the time to indicate that Ford was not in sympathy with such political and social ideologies of the Stuart court as the divine right of kings and codes of Platonic love. This section illustrates that Ford was greatly involved in the maelstrom of Stuart England but that there is no evidence of decadence in his expressed views on contemporaneous events.

The non-dramatic works are related to the historical scene. Honor Triumphant is considered a tour de force--perhaps an answer to the contemporary pamphlet warfare

against women--not sure proof of Ford's immorality or amorality. The historical survey leads the writer to doubt the sincerity of Ford's praise of James I in A Line of Life. Analysis and evaluation of the thought and style of the early poems leads to the conclusion that Fame's Memorial is more artistic and Christ's Bloody Sweat less interesting than other writers have judged.

The five extant collaborative plays of Ford contain nothing to indicate he was immoral. Only The Witch of Edmonton reflects much interest in the contemporary scene. Ford's share in each play is examined and evaluated: in every case poetry and characterization are judged successful. The Welsh Ambassador is considered the weakest and The Witch of Edmonton the best of the collaborations. Three plays of questionable authorship are examined in detail. On the basis of verbal parallels and other stylistic matters, this study concludes that The Duke of Lerma is quite possibly Ford's, that The Laws of Candy is very probably his, and that all of Perkin Warbeck is most definitely his.

The eight independent plays illustrate the fact that Ford was involved with real life. The social history helps us to see The Broken Heart as a consideration of contemporary problems of English women. The Lady's Trial is found to be a serious social comedy. The interpretation of Perkin Warbeck as a commentary on the divine right of kings is accepted and illustrated.

The tragedies are defended against charges of moral decadence. The Broken Heart is seen as a moral message, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore as a play of great spiritual significance, and Love's Sacrifice as a scientific analysis of the problem of elective affinities occurring after marriage.

The Queen, with its faulty characterization and inadequate exposition, is found to be the weakest of the independent plays. Love's Sacrifice--powerful, logical, skillfully plotted--is considered Ford's most underrated play. The Broken Heart, full of pathos and truth, is called Ford's best drama.

A brief closing chapter rapidly surveys the trends in criticism of Ford and comments on the work of some of the chief critics on the dramatist. At the last three areas are enumerated which seem capable of yielding profit to future researchers on John Ford.

## INTRODUCTION

Today the reputation of John Ford as poet and dramatist stands at the highest point it has reached since his own age. Seven book-length studies and many articles which have been published since 1932 attest to the popularity of the dramatist among modern readers.

Despite this recent concentration on Ford there are several areas relative to his work which need more attention. One of the most significant of these involves the question of decadence, which has been part of the criticism of Ford since his own century. Ford has been branded a moral decadent by many critics: they have called him a "sensualist," an "amoral pagan," a "moral anarchist," and an "unbridled individualist" in matters of love. But there are no truly valid grounds--in his life, in his attitudes toward contemporaneous events, in his early prose and poetry, or in his plays--that indicate this defamation has been justly pronounced. Yet the idea that Ford was a sensualist continues to this time, and one of the chief purposes of this study is to show that in neither the works nor the biography of Ford is there evidence to justify the assaults three centuries of critics have made against his fame.

One of the reasons why this error persists is that there has been little study of Ford's relation to his age or of his early works in poetry and prose, all of which preceded

(so far as we know) the entire dramatic works. The charge of decadence exists partially because of one early prose pamphlet, Honor Triumphant. Knowledge of certain literary movements and social events in the Jacobean scene helps us to see this work for what it really is--not sure proof of Ford's immorality or amorality but a tour de force occasioned by a specific social event and perhaps by a specific literary movement.

There are many other elements in the Stuart era which have a bearing on Ford's work. The poet has too often been carelessly dismissed as having little to do with reality, but a study which considers his works in relation to the political and social events in which they were written shows that he had a great deal to do with reality. Chapter two is concerned with the aspects of Jacobean and Caroline England which loom most significantly in the background of Ford's literary career. Rather than undertaking a history of the Stuart period, I am merely trying to establish possible relationships between Ford and some of the most notable figures of the age. So little is known of Ford's life that it is extremely difficult to discern his precise attitudes toward some of the events of the Stuart reigns. But even where we cannot see his own reactions toward certain occurrences in the age, we can see the reactions of his class, his profession, or of other men from Devonshire, Ford's birthplace.

The non-dramatic works are generally dismissed in a few pages by most writers on Ford. They deserve more attention than this. Some of them have a measure of intrinsic merit; all give evidence of his thought and values in the period between 1606 and 1620 (of which years the plays tell us nothing about him). One of the primary purposes of the present study is a detailed examination of these neglected non-dramatic works.

Of the collaborative plays some have been treated in great detail before--The Witch of Edmonton in particular. Others have only recently been accepted as part of the canon of Ford, and they have not yet been evaluated as Ford's work. The chapters on the plays of multiple or questionable authorship attempt to synthesize scholarship concerning the dating, textual problems, and authorship of these plays; and they also attempt an analysis of the artistic merit of these works.

The section on each of the independent plays is also in part a synthesis and in part a fresh analysis. For all of these plays except The Queen, which was not assigned to Ford until 1906, the syntheses combine samples of nineteenth century criticism with others from the twentieth to provide a historical view of the criticism of each of Ford's major works. For my own analysis of each play limited points of view have been established. My concentration on a few aspects of each play does not mean that other aspects are not touched upon--all areas which are necessary to an understanding



of the play and to the directions taken in the criticism of that play have been dealt with.

The final chapter is given to a brief sketch of Ford's literary reputation. This section makes no attempt at completeness; many competent critics are not mentioned at all. Only those scholars and critics whose work has made an exceptional contribution to the study of Ford or whose work is representative of general trends in the criticism of the dramatist have been noted. Most attention has been given to works written since 1932, at which time Ford's reputation among critics began its rapid climb to the very high position which it now enjoys.

Since there is no single complete edition of Ford's works, several editions have been used in this study. This leads to some disparity in the internal references to Ford's works. The reader should consult the footnote to the first citation of each of Ford's works to understand the significance of the internal references.



## CHAPTER I

### JOHN FORD AND THE HOUSE OF FORD

The biographies of most of the dramatists of the English Renaissance are interesting primarily for the questions they leave unanswered. The life of John Ford, the finest of the Caroline playwrights, is no exception. Despite the fact that he wrote two or three of the most notable plays of the entire Renaissance, and despite the fact that he seems to have been a man of some influence outside the province of literature, history has obscured his name.

The records do show that John Ford came from an old and respected family of landed gentry who settled at Chagford in Devonshire in the fifteenth century. The family seems to have consisted of two main branches, the seat of the older and principal branch perhaps being located at Bagtor in the sixteenth century. The dramatist was a descendant of this branch.<sup>1</sup>

The Fords were connected by marriage with some of the more important houses of Devonshire--including the Pomeroy, the Walronds, and the St. Cleres<sup>2</sup>--and they were an influential family in their own right. In 1524 a grant of arms was made to John Ford of Ashburton, the great-grandfather of the dramatist.<sup>3</sup> About this time, during Henry the Eighth's dissolution of the monasteries, substantial property at

Ipplepen passed into the hands of the Fords. They held the leases on the rectorial tithes, glebe, and rectory house of the property there: the tithes had a value of f495, and the rectorial glebe contained nearly one hundred acres.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the Fords held property in nearby Torbryan, and they owned considerable other land in Ashburton, Ilsington, and adjacent parishes.<sup>5</sup>

Ford's grandfather, George Ford, seems to have come into control of the manor of Bagtor, which became the inheritance of his eldest child, Thomas, who must have been a wealthy man. In addition to the Bagtor property Thomas Ford owned part of the manor house at Ilsington, an impressive building with massive walls and elaborate stonework; the house was either rebuilt or largely repaired during his lifetime. Another indication of his wealth is provided by the appearance of his name on the subsidy roll for 1588, wherein he was assessed f12, the second largest sum assessed in Ilsington and eight neighboring parishes.<sup>6</sup>

Thomas Ford made an excellent alliance, marrying Elizabeth Popham, the niece of Sir John Popham, the man who was to serve as Lord Chief Justice under both Elizabeth and James. Thomas and Elizabeth had six children; John Ford was the second of their four sons.<sup>7</sup>

Ford was born in 1586. The precise date is unknown, but the great Shakesperean researcher Edmond Malone did manage to discover the record of his baptism and fix the

approximate date. Ford was baptized on April 17, 1586, at Ilslington in Devonshire.<sup>8</sup>

No details of his early life are known. He might possibly have been the "John Ford Devon gen." who matriculated on March 26, 1601, at Exeter College, Oxford, at the age of sixteen. But John Ford is a very common name in Devonshire, and there is no certainty that this Oxford student was the future dramatist; if it was he, then Ford could not have been at the university more than a term or two, for in the next year a Latin inscription in the roll book of the Middle Temple gives us definite knowledge of Ford, the first since the date of his baptism:

1602 fforde Jo. ad.	Decimo sexto die Novembris anno praed. M <sup>r</sup> Johannes fforde filius secundus Thome fforde de Ilslington in Com. Devon. ar. admissus est in Societate Medii Templi Specialiter et Obligatus una cum Ma <sup>r</sup> is Georgis Hooper et Thomae fforde et dat pro fine-- iijlvjs viijd. <sup>9</sup>
---------------------------	--

Ford was following his elder brother, Henry, a favorite cousin also named John Ford, and several other relatives into the Middle Temple. Though Henry had been admitted two years earlier for an entrance fee of only forty shillings, "on the instance of Sir John Popham," the second son of the family was required to pay the full customary fee of f3.6s. 8d.<sup>10</sup>--a fact which has done its part in creating the contention that Ford frequently was considered a member in ill standing in the Ford and Popham families.

This contention might seem to gain support from Ford's record as a student at the Inns of Court. He was expelled during the Hilary Term of 1605/1606 for failing to pay his buttery bill. But such an occurrence was "an all too frequent offence" among the young members of the Temple,<sup>11</sup> and Ford's failure to meet his debt need not be considered a significant transgression.

Ford was re-admitted to the Middle Temple on June 10, 1608. The grant of re-admission by the Masters of the Bench imposed some qualifications; they obviously had not forgotten Ford's past record:

yf the sayd Master Forde doe before the ende of this Tearme paye all manner of duties as well pencions & Commons as other duties before this tyme due, and doe also bring and deliver fortye shillings to the Masters of the Bench at the Bench Table for his fine imposed uppon uppon him by the said Masters of the Bench at this parliament and shall also then and there submytt himself acknowledging his fault with penitency. That then the said Master Forde shalbe restored to the Fellowshippe and Societie and shall have and retayne his antiquity according to his first admittance the said former expulsion notwithstanding....<sup>12</sup>

Forde evidently complied with all these terms, paying the old bills and the small fine and acknowledging his penitence for all past sins--retaining in turn his "antiquity," i.e., seniority.

By the end of May, 1617, Ford was again in trouble with the Masters of the Bench, this time for wearing a hat. As the Masters put it, Ford was part of "a greate conspiracy of and

among dyvers gentlemen of this Fellowship to breake the aun-  
 cient custom of wearing cappes in the Temple hall at dynners,  
 suppers and Breakfasts, and in the Temple Church in prayer  
 tymes and Sermon tymes both in the Tearme tymes and in the  
 Vacacions and in the time of Reading...."<sup>13</sup> Junior members  
 greatly resented the rule requiring them to wear caps, and  
 they not infrequently failed to comply with the regulation.  
 On this occasion their dissatisfaction seems to have led to  
 organized opposition. The rebels chose to dine either in  
 their rooms or in public establishments outside the Temple  
 rather than suffer the indignity of having to wear a cap to  
 meals in the Temple hall. The Masters of the Bench chose to  
 reply to this outburst of independence with punitive measures;  
 they ordered "that none of those gentlemen who have so put  
 them selves owt of Commons whose names are subscribed under  
 this order shalbe admytted to come agayne into commons in the  
 Temple untill they have first submytted them selves to the  
 Masters of the Bench according to the auncient orders of this  
 howse and so shall obtayne their good wills to come into  
 commons againe...."<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, only a limited period of  
 time was allowed for the recalcitrants to perform their  
 penance: "And all the chambers of such of the same gentlemen  
 as shall not so submytt them selves before the ende of the  
 first weeke of the nexte Tearme shalbe seized forfeited and  
 disposed of to the use of the howse."<sup>15</sup> The names of the  
 forty transgressors follow; "Mr. Forde Jo." is the tenth name  
 on the list.<sup>16</sup>

Another John Ford had been admitted to the Middle Temple six months before, on November 11, 1616; but it is highly improbable that the reference is to him. The names would have been entered in order of seniority, and several members who had been resident at the Inn far longer than six months follow Ford on the list. The offender is undoubtedly the dramatist.<sup>17</sup>

It is quite possible that Ford did not submit to the authorities. His name does not appear again in the records of the Middle Temple.

This absence of any official reference to Ford after 1617 makes the suggestion that he never was called to the Bar a probable one. Since any such call would have been noted in the records of the Middle Temple and since Ford has never made the slightest reference to his own pleadings in a court of law, it is most likely that he never received a degree as utter barrister. However, his long association with the Inns of Court suggests that his profession was of a legal nature, if not actually that of a lawyer.<sup>18</sup> William Gifford has suggested that Ford's "anxious disavowals to his several patrons of permitting his dramatic labours to encroach upon his proper business would almost lead to a conclusion that he acted as a kind of auditor, or comptroller, for the landed property of the nobility, and managed the pecuniary concerns of their estates, for which his knowledge of the law afforded facility on the one side, and security on the other."<sup>19</sup> But this is only a guess, and it is based on no real evidence. Ford's long



years at the Inns of Court did leave some impression on his writing--in the dedications and prologues of his plays he speaks of himself as a scholar and makes references to his study, and legal terms and various other allusions to the law appear with some frequency in the plays themselves.

Ford's father died in 1610, being buried on April 4 at IIsington Church, where a tombstone honoring his memory was placed in the Bagtor aisle.<sup>20</sup> The will of Thomas Ford has also been considered a reflection of familial disapproval of the second son. Thomas Ford's last testament, drawn up on May 5, 1609, and proved on June 25 of the year of his death, bequeathed his portion of IIsington Manor to his wife until her death, at which time it was to pass to his eldest son, Henry. To John the father's legacy was slight: "I doe give and bequeath unto John Ford my sonne tenn poundes of lawfull money of England to be paid unto him by my Executors w<sup>th</sup>in one whole yeare next after my decease."<sup>21</sup> John received an inheritance of ten pounds; the two younger sons, Thomas and Edward, were each bequeathed ten pounds annually until their mother's death, after which the sum of their annuity was to be doubled. This great disparity in the father's treatment of his three youngest sons demands explanation, but unfortunately there are no known facts which can throw any positive light on the causes behind Thomas Ford's actions.<sup>22</sup>

At any rate Ford was probably not left destitute by the terms of his father's will. Some evidence of the poet's

possessions appears in the will of his older brother, Henry:

Item I geve and bequeath unto John Forde gent. my Brother Twentie pounds a yeare for terme of his lief, To be payed imediately after my death att the Fower usuall quarters, That is to saye the Feaste of St. Michael the Archangell, The birth of our Lord, the Anunciacion of St. Marie the Virgin, and the Nativitie of St. John the Baptiste issueing out of my personage of Iplepen upon Condicion he surrender the estate he hath in two Tenements called Glandfeilds groundes Bilver parke and willow meade lying in Iplepen and Torbryan to the use of my Children.<sup>23</sup>

The will is dated September 17, 1616--a mere two days before Henry's passing. At this time Henry and his wife, Katherine, had two daughters--both in their infancy, as the couple had not married until October 3, 1612. Their son was not born until after his father's death--Katherine named him Henry. Ford's response to his brother's wishes is not known.<sup>24</sup>

In 1606, in the interval between his expulsion from and re-admission to the Inns of Court, Ford saw works of his in print for the first time.<sup>25</sup> His first significant poem, Fame's Memorial, and his first prose work, Honor Triumphant, both appeared in 1606.

Fame's Memorial or The Earl of Devonshire Deceased is an elegy honoring the memory of Charles Mountjoy, the Earl of Devonshire. The poem was dedicated to Mountjoy's widow, the Countess Penelope. Even though the poem is an occasional piece, there is no reason to suspect the sincerity of Ford's feelings.

From the standpoint of Ford's biography, the poem is significant for several reasons. For one thing the poem shows Ford's independence of spirit:<sup>26</sup> the Earl and Countess of Devonshire were not in social favor in 1606. Secondly, the work gives some evidence of the breadth and care of Ford's reading: it is imbued with the aroma of romance and idealized love.<sup>27</sup> Finally, Ford seems to say that he is writing the poem from a country other than his own; he mentions his "wretched heart forlorn,/Who since at home disgrac'd, abroad is borne..."(323).<sup>28</sup> These words could be taken literally, since a young man of a nature as sensitive as his seems to have been certainly might have considered expulsion from the Inns a disgrace and have gone abroad to seek peace of mind.

The poem also refers to Ford's own unhappy love affair with "Lycia the cruel"(322).<sup>29</sup> This case of unrequited passion is quite possibly imaginary, for the style of the whole poem is so artificial that it is difficult to take the allusions to Lycia literally.<sup>30</sup>

The prose piece Honor Triumphant gives further evidence of Ford's immersion in romantic writers such as Spenser, Sidney, Petrarch, and various others. But its chief biographical importance stems from the writer's position therein as a defender of the courtly love tradition. Many later readers have felt that this work stamps Ford as an immoral, or amoral, pagan, an advocate of free love.<sup>31</sup> This interpretation takes the writings of a young gallant of twenty rather too seriously.

A short poem entitled The Monarch's Meeting was included in the volume with Honor Triumphant. It adds nothing to our picture of Ford, unless we take a chauvinistic outburst against the French, Spanish, Italians, Irish, Germans, and Indians seriously.<sup>32</sup>

Between 1606 and 1613 Ford's literary career seems to have waned--unless a lost play attributed to Ford, An Ill Beginning Has A Good End, was actually written by him. The play was acted at court during the Christmas season of 1612/1613. If this play was the product of Ford's hand, then it places the beginning of his dramatic career at a date nearly a decade earlier than it was previously thought to have occurred. However, the play was acted by the King's Company, with whom Ford was certainly associated in the 1620's; and he could have had connections with them as early as 1612.<sup>33</sup>

In any event Ford was returning to literature about this time, for in 1613 he published a long religious poem entitled Christ's Bloody Sweat or The Son of God in His Agony. It is one of the few hints concerning Ford's religion that posterity retains. In a prefatory statement, he writes: "I confesse, I have, touching my perticular, beene long carried with the doubts of folly, youth and opinion, and as long miscaried in the darknesse of unhappinesse, both in invention and action. This was not the path that led to a contented rest, or a respected name."<sup>34</sup> This address is perhaps too conventional for biographical purposes, but it does have a tone of conviction, a tone which is sustained throughout the work.

Few verses provide any insight into Ford's religious preferences, but the following stanza is couched in Calvinistic terms of predestination and the elect:

Yet neither did the Death or Bloodie sweat  
of Christ, extend to soules ordain'd to Hell:  
But to the chosen, and elect, beget  
A double life, although the Scriptures tell  
How this meeke Lambe of God did chiefly come  
To call the lost sheepe, and the strayers home.<sup>35</sup>

This passage is not in itself sufficient to place the label of "Puritan" on its author, but his strong Protestant bias is certainly clear. In another passage he bitterly attacks the Roman Catholics, particularly the Jesuits.<sup>36</sup>

On June 14, 1613, a long philosophical work entitled The Golden Mean was entered on the Stationer's Register. It was published later that year by an anonymous writer whose desire for obscurity extended even to the dedication, which read simply, "to a great Lord." This was evidently a popular work, for a second edition, an "Enlarged" one, was published the following year. Again the author withheld his name, but this time he openly dedicated the work: "to the Earle of Northumberland,"<sup>37</sup> a political prisoner whom King James had kept confined in the Tower of London since 1605.

Ford did not publicly claim this work until 1620, when in the preface to a new work, The Line of Life, he said, "In all things, no one thing can more requisitely be observed to be practised, than the golden mean; the exemplification whereof, however heretofore attributed, I dare not so poorly undervalue myself and labours, as not to call mine"(111).<sup>38</sup>

The Line of Life, in turn, was dedicated to Sir James Hay, Viscount Doncaster, the son-in-law of the imprisoned Northumberland.<sup>39</sup> It is a prose treatise shorter than The Golden Mean but otherwise much like the earlier work. Each adds little to our picture of Ford except to show his reflection of the important vein of stoicism which permeated the thought of the English Renaissance.<sup>40</sup>

By 1621 Ford had definitely begun his dramatic career. That year saw the production of The Witch of Edmonton, the result of a collaboration of Thomas Dekker, William Rowley, and John Ford. Three years later these same authors joined with John Webster for the writing of Keep the Widow Waking, a play which brought Dekker and Rowley considerable trouble with the law. Dekker's deposition in the case was signed by Nathaniel Finch, a lawyer who was later mentioned by Ford in his dedication to The Lover's Melancholy: "To my worthily respected friends, Nathaniel Finch, John Ford [the cousin of the playwright]...and all the rest of the Noble Society of Gray's Inn." Miss M. Joan Sargeaunt has asked, "Is it possible that Nathaniel Finch was the connecting link between Ford and Dekker?"<sup>41</sup> The question implies, I think, that Finch might have introduced Dekker and Ford and thereby have been indirectly responsible for the latter's dramatic career. It would probably be more reasonable to suggest that Ford, seeing his partner Dekker in a touchy situation because of his part

in Keep the Widow Waking, asked a lawyer whom he knew well to handle Dekker's desposition.

Ford probably collaborated on several other plays between 1621 and 1625 or so. By 1628 he had begun to write plays without the aid of collaborators, and his The Lover's Melancholy was published in that year. In the dedication Ford says, "My presumption of coming in print in this kind /that is, with a play/ hath hitherto been unreprouable, this piece being the first that ever courted reader; and it is very possible that the like complement with me may soon grow out of fashion"(3-4). This air of condescension has infuriated some readers, but of course it really means nothing. As a matter of fact, the "fashion" of publishing his own works did not displease Ford: in the next decade he published a succession of plays, including his two excellent tragedies, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore (1633) and The Broken Heart (1633), the great historical drama, Perkin Warbeck (1634), and an interesting tragicomedy, The Lady's Trial (1639). In the plays Ford was, of course, concerned with representing the characters of other men and women. We may recognize some of their ideas as his own, but otherwise the plays can give little clues to the dramatist himself.

Nor do the dedications, where Ford did speak of himself, help very much to fill in our picture of him. He dedicated 'Tis Pity to John Lord Mordaunt, the first Earl of Peterborough, with whom he seems to have had personal

dealings, for he wrote, "my service must ever owe particular duty to your favours, by a particular engagement"(110). Here Ford's language is vague, and nothing can be guessed of the nature of his service. The dedication called 'Tis Pity "these first fruits of my leisure"(109), meaning perhaps that Ford was then retired. It has been suggested that Ford's acknowledgment of a "particular engagement" precludes the idea of his retirement.<sup>42</sup> But this is not necessarily the case, for there is no logical connection between these two parts of the dedication<sup>43</sup> and Ford seems to have been speaking of the engagement as an event not of the recent past. Ford could have been retired by this time, for he was nearing fifty. However, his wording is too vague to justify any such conclusion.

Ford dedicated three others of his plays to noblemen: The Broken Heart to William Craven, Baron of Hampstead-Marshall; Perkin Warbeck to William Cavendish, the Earl of Newcastle; and The Fancies Chaste and Noble to Randal MacDonnell, the Earl of Antrim. The tone and wording of these dedications indicate that Ford was not personally acquainted with the three peers. These addresses show appropriate respect for the lords, but they are nonetheless manly and independent,<sup>44</sup> as these lines to Lord MacDonnell illustrate: "A practice of courtship to greatness hath not hitherto, in me, aimed at any thrift; yet I have ever honoured virtue, as the richest ornament to the noblest titles"(221).



His other plays were dedicated to personal friends, among them his cousin John Ford of Gray's Inn. To his friends, his language is extremely affectionate, as in the inscription to John and Mary Wyrley which precedes The Lady's Trial: "I have enjoyed freely acquaintance with the sweetness of your dispositions, and can justly account, from the nobleness of them, an evident distinction between friendship and friends. The latter--according to the practice of compliment--are usually met with, and often without search: the other many have searched for, I have found. For which, through I partake a benefit of the fortune, yet to you, most equal pair, must remain the honour of that bounty"(3).

Five of the seven independent plays which Ford published have prologues. All are well written; all are significant. They show the reader the same kind of man that the dedications gave evidence of, a proud man, one who is conscious of himself and his art. He takes pains to defend himself against possible charges that he borrowed too freely from other writers.<sup>45</sup> He plays down his own attempts at comedy, insisting that his serious plots are his main concern.<sup>46</sup>

He is conscious also of the nobility of art. In the prologue to The Lover's Melancholy, Ford says, "It is art's scorn, that some of late have made/ The noble use of poetry a trade." And before The Lady's Trial he writes again against the poetasters:

Wit, wit's the word in fashion, that alone  
 Cries up the poet, which, though neatly shown,  
 Is rather censur'd, oftentimes, than known.

He who will venture on a jest, that can  
 Rail on another's pain, or idly scan  
 Affairs of state, O, he's the only man!

A goodly approbation, which must bring  
 Fame with contempt by such a deadly sting!  
 The Muses chatter, who were wont to sing.<sup>47</sup>

It would seem that Stuart Sherman's estimate of Ford is basically correct. He says that Ford was "a gentlemen by birth, an aristocrat by temper" and that "his mind was not only cultivated, but elevated as well..."<sup>48</sup> That he was a man of breeding, taste, and sensitivity can hardly be doubted. This much of the man his writings do show. But there is little more--and we must look elsewhere for further knowledge of the man himself.

A few allusions to Ford in the literature of the age may add a little to our knowledge of him. A poem by William Hemmings entitled "Elegy on Randolph's Finger" makes an interesting allusion:

Deep In a dumpe Jacke forde alone was gott  
 W<sup>th</sup> folded Armes and Melancholye hatt,<sup>49</sup>

That this Jack Ford is really the dramatist John Ford cannot be doubted. Hemming's poem was written around 1630-1632; and in 1635, in "Hierarchie of the Blessed Angells" Thomas Heywood provided a list of poets whose "names are curtal'd which they first had given," and one of the lines contains a familiar name: "And hee's now but Jacke Foord, that once

were John."<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, the lines from Hemming's poem were reprinted in a slightly modified form in "On the Time Poets," which appeared in Choyce Drollery in 1656; there the couplet reads:

Deep in a dump John Forde alone was got,  
With folded armes and melancholy hat.<sup>51</sup>

Many observers have felt that these lines were proof of Ford's melancholy, brooding disposition. Havelock Ellis called them a "vivid touch of portraiture" which shows Ford's "shy and reserved temperament."<sup>52</sup> A. W. Ward thought the lines ridiculed Ford "for a tendency to self-seclusion and melancholy."<sup>53</sup> But M. Joan Sargeaunt has objected to this line of criticism, denying that the evidence shows Ford to have been a shy and lonely man: "it is dangerous to assume that the friend of Dekker and the man who had been expelled for debts at the Middle Temple and who joined in a general revolt at wearing his legal cap at the proper times, was at all this kind of person."<sup>54</sup>

Miss Sargeaunt may be right. The editor of "Elegy on Randolph's Finger," G. C. Moore Smith, has suggested that the lines are nothing more than an allusion to Ford's first published play, The Lover's Melancholy--just as another couplet is quite possibly a reference to a second play by Ford, his great tragedy, The Broken Heart:

More worthyes Like to thes I could Impart  
but that we are troubled wth a broken hart.

Several references to the works of other poets are introduced in this way: the line "and Dekker followed after In A dreame" is certainly an allusion to Dekker his Dreame. It is quite possible that the notorious couplet is merely a reference to Ford's play.<sup>55</sup>

The most intriguing interpretation of the lines is that of Stuart Sherman, who objects to the current of argument represented by Ellis and Ward, maintaining that the meaning of the couplet is explained by one of the curious pictures in the frontispiece of an early seventeenth century work that Ford was certainly familiar with, Robert Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy:

It represents a tall, elegantly attired young gentleman standing with folded hands and wide hat pulled far down over his eyes. Beside him are books and quill pen, at his feet music and a lute, and he is labeled "Inamorato." He illustrates the section of the work called "Love Melancholy." The couplet, then, does not furnish us perhaps "that vivid touch of portraiture" which Ellis sees in it, but it refers Ford by a conventional sign to a well recognized type. This interpretation is borne out by a passage in Cornwallis; love, he says, brings forth "songs full of passion, enough to procure crossed arms, and the Hat pulled down."<sup>56</sup>

This striking similarity between Hemming's couplet on the one hand and Burton's "Inamorato" and the prose passage from an essay by Sir William Cornwallis on the other does seem to indicate that Ford had a reputation as a lover. Sherman certainly thought so: "Ford portrayed the various passions of love in his dramas from an inside view and not

with the detachment of the sovereign dramatist nor the objectivity of a scholar or physician, but with the brooding sympathy of a lover."<sup>57</sup>

After the publication of The Lady's Trial in 1639, the name of John Ford seems to have disappeared from the London scene. Many observers have assumed that Ford, then a man fifty-two or fifty-three years of age, must have died about this time. There are a few mysteries, very slight ones it must be admitted, that lead one to wonder about the truth of this assumption.

An allusion to Ford appeared in Wit's Recreations, published in 1640:

If after the Muses did admire that well,  
Of Hellicon as elder times do tell,  
I dare presume to say upon my word;  
They much more pleasure take in thee rare Ford.<sup>58</sup>

The present tense in the final line may be influencing our opinion too much, but it does seem as though the lines were written about a living person. This proves nothing of course, for the poem could possibly have been written before 1640 and Ford could have died in the interim between the writing and the publishing of the epigram.

Nor does a poem entitled "A Contract of Love and Truth" reveal much about the dramatist. It was discovered about 1925 in a manuscript copy of a little poetical miscellany. It bears the signature "J. Foord"--the spelling of the surname here being a frequent variant for "Ford." The poem celebrates the marriage of Sir Erasmus de la Fontaine

and Mary Noel, a subject in which John Ford could have been interested. Since this brief poem has seldom been reprinted, it is given here in its entirety:

Soe gold is priz'd, and being chastly pure  
 Exceeds all grosser Mettals that endure  
 Experiments with losse: as constant Trueth  
 Renown'd for perfect tryall, love, birth, youth,  
 Excellent sweetnesse, or aught else transcends  
 A common Prayse, whose onely Beauty ends  
 Lesser /then/ when it first beganne; whiles Worth  
 Lowder in sound then Fame can set it forth  
 Makes Memory a Chronicle whose story  
 Of reall meritt amplifies the Glory.  
 New ages shall admire, and for fashion  
 Yield their endeavours to an Imitation.  
 Example leads to vertue in this Payre  
 As in a mirrour may be seene how fayre  
 Love (without blemish) of two equall Hearts  
 Makes one: and like choyce Musicke set in parts  
 Orders a perfect harmony. Here measure  
 Such reall Constancy, a reall Treasure.  
 Trueth is not to be bought; 'tis to be trew,  
 Fayre, and what makes all beauty fairer, New.  
 A smooth tongue, soft behaviour, winning face,  
 Youth in the spring, courtshippe, delight, wit, grace,  
 Rich plentye, are but meere Deceipts of Art;  
 Except supported by a Noble Heart.  
 Additions then make all estate and blood  
 Noble; when to be great is to be Good.  
 Death sweeps their names away who onely strive  
 Not by Desert, but Glory to survive.  
 End all in this Example without strife;  
 Wise Love is here the Husband, Trueth the Wife.<sup>59</sup>

The discoverer of this poem, Bertram Lloyd, noted that lines 3-6, 8-9, 16-17, and 24-28 recall other passages in Ford.<sup>60</sup> This is certainly true, though some of these likenesses are rather superficial. Even so, in defense of the suggestion that the poem is Ford's, one might point out that the repetition and wordplay in line 8 are devices that Ford frequently used, that line 24 is a conclusion typical of Ford,

and that lines 25-26, which seem a bit out of place in a poem of this type, end with a thought very similar to Ford's argument in A Line of Life. The poem could well be Ford's. But even if it is by John Ford, its value in connection with Ford's disappearance from London is destroyed because it cannot be dated with precision. The MS is dated "circa 1650," but the couple was married no later than 1645 and possibly several years earlier than that date.<sup>61</sup>

Of further interest is a copy of The English Secretorie or Method of Writing of Epistles and Letters &c. which bears on its title page the inscription, "Johne Ford Middle Tempil 15 July 1641."<sup>62</sup> As we have already noted, there was more than one John Ford at the Middle Temple in the early seventeenth century, and it cannot be positively shown that this book was the property of the templar-dramatist.

The existence of these few documents lends support to the contention that Ford did not die in London in 1639. It has been thought by some that Ford probably withdrew from London about this time and returned to his home in Devonshire. William Gifford recorded that there were "faint traditions" among the people near Ilsington that the dramatist had retired to his birthplace and there lived his remaining years among the comforts which the fortunes of years of attention to his profession had gained for him.<sup>63</sup> But Gifford was writing in 1827, nearly two hundred years after Ford's disappearance from history, and those "faint" traditions can count for little.

The chief support for the contention that Ford retired to Devonshire and lived there for some years is the signature "Jo. Ford" on a short commendatory poem for Dia Poemata, a book of verses by Edmund Elys, a resident of East Allington in Devonshire, a village not far from Ilsington. Elys' work was published in 1655, sixteen years after Ford is generally believed to have died. The book could not have been written very long before 1655, because Elys was not born until about 1634.

The poem has not impressed any critic as being in the style of the dramatist. Miss Sargeaunt has attempted to explain this by suggesting that Ford was merely imitating young Elys' "highly artificial and often very offensive style";<sup>64</sup> but this is a proposition that other critics have been unwilling to accept.<sup>65</sup>

The case for Ford's authorship is slight. The connection of the poem with the area of Devonshire near Ford's home is suggestive but inconclusive. The chief reason for thinking this, and the earlier marriage poem, to be the work of Ford seems to be the simple fact that no other of the numerous John Fords living at the time is known to have written poetry except the dramatist's own cousin, the student of Gray's Inn, and he wrote only a few commendatory verses. The authorship of the poem is still in doubt.

The general assumption has been that Ford was dead by 1656, the year in which Andrew Penneycuicke published The



Sun's Darling, calling the piece an "orphan" one. But as Miss Sargeaunt has said, "this is no proof that Ford was not alive at the time of publication, especially if he had left London and was resident in Devonshire."<sup>66</sup>

The precise place and time of Ford's death will probably never be known. It seems likely that he did not die at Ilsington; for if he had, the record of his death would have been entered in the Parish Register, where the deaths of his sister Jane and his brothers Thomas and Edward are noted.<sup>67</sup>

No records have been found to indicate that Ford ever married or that, if married, he had any children. The line of the Ilsington Fords was continued by the posthumous son of Henry, Ford's eldest brother. This child, once incorrectly assumed to be the son or grandson of the dramatist, became Sir Henry Ford, a man well known in Devonshire and a knight whose abilities were sufficient to earn him the position of Secretary for Ireland during the reign of the second Charles Stuart. Sir Henry died in 1684, his will being dated September 11 of that year. He had two sons, Charles and Henry, and several daughters. By the time of his death, he also had at least one grandson, also named Henry.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, the Ford name must have continued for some time.

The Fords were still in possession of the Bagtor property as late as the final few years of the eighteenth century.<sup>69</sup> The old manor house at Ilsington lasted well into the nineteenth century, though it had long since fallen into disrepair.

The condition of the house deteriorated badly in the Victorian era, and it was pulled down about 1870.<sup>70</sup> Before this, the land at Ilsington had passed to descendants of Sir Henry through the female line, and at Ilsington the name of Ford was no more.<sup>71</sup>

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup>M. Joan Sargeaunt, John Ford (Oxford, 1935), p.1; The Dramatic Works of John Ford, ed. William Gifford (London, 1827), I, vi; J.P.F., "Family of Ford the Dramatist," Gentleman's Magazine, XCVII (August, 1827), 103.

<sup>2</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 2; Gifford, p. vii.

<sup>3</sup>Sargeaunt, pp. 1, 212. The Ford arms were to be "Per fess argent and sable in chief a greyhound courant and in base an owl, the whole within a bordure engrailed counter-changed," the crest being "Between two apple branches vert, fructed argent, a demi grey-hound rampant sable, charged with three acorns in bend, between two bendlets or" (Harleian MS. 5846, f. 37, and Harleian MS. 1080, f.139v.).

<sup>4</sup>Sargeaunt, pp. 13-14.

<sup>5</sup>Gifford, p. vi; Sargeaunt, pp. 1, 13-14.

<sup>6</sup>Sargeaunt, pp. 1, 212 (The largest sum was assessed Hugh Pomeroy of Ilsington); Gifford, p. vii; Robert Davril, Le Drame de John Ford (Paris, 1954), p. 46.

<sup>7</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup>Gifford, pp. vii-viii.

<sup>9</sup>The Works of John Ford, ed. William Gifford, with additions by Reverend Alexander Dyce (London, 1895), I, xvi. In some cases the spelling of the inscription given here has been modified in accordance with Sargeaunt, p. 212. This edition of Ford's works is hereafter cited as Gifford-Dyce.

<sup>10</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 212.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 4. The offence is not mentioned in the records of the Middle Temple until June 10, 1608, when Ford was seeking readmission; the entry reads: "Whereas Master John Forde hath made his humble petcion to the Masters of the Bench at this Parliament to be restored into this fellowshipp being expulsed out of the howse in hillary Tearme anno tertio Jacobi Regis as by the Buttery Booke may appeare for the Causes therein mentioned." See M. Joan Sargeaunt, "John Ford at the Middle Temple," Review of English Studies, VIII (January, 1932), 69.

<sup>12</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 15, 214.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 29, 214. The other John Ford was from Chew-ford, Somerset.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 16; Gifford, p. xiv.

<sup>19</sup>Gifford, p. xiv.

<sup>20</sup>J.P.F., p. 103. Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 8.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. Thomas Marc Parrott, "A Note on John Ford" Modern Language Notes, LVIII (April, 1943), 249, thinks the father's actions indicative of his disapproval of his son.

<sup>23</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 13. Henry's will prompts me to suggest that Thomas Ford was not as generous to his second son as to the younger boys because John was not as financially dependent upon him as Thomas and Edward were, but Sargeaunt, p. 20, suggests that Henry's will indicates John was having financial difficulties.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 13, See also J.P.F., p. 104.

<sup>25</sup>It has been suggested that Ford's first published work was a commendatory poem to Barnabe Barnes--see Mark Eccles, "Barnabe Barnes" in Thomas Lodge and Other Elizabethans, ed. Charles J. Sisson (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1933), p. 231.

<sup>26</sup>Reverend J.H.B. Masterman, The Age of Milton (London, 1901), p. 81.

<sup>27</sup>G.F. Sensabaugh, The Tragic Muse of John Ford (Stanford, 1944), p. 174.

<sup>28</sup>Unless otherwise noted all citations from Ford's works are from the Gifford-Dyce edition. The internal references are to page numbers.

<sup>29</sup>In the manuscript version, the name is given as "Lucia."  
See Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup>See 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and The Broken Heart, ed. Stuart Pratt Sherman (Boston, 1915), p. xiv; and Emile Legouis and Louis Cazamian, A History of English Literature (New York, 1930), p. 506.

<sup>32</sup>Gifford-Dyce, III, 372.

<sup>33</sup>E.H.C. Oliphant, The Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher (New Haven, 1927), p. 125. See also Parrott, pp. 247-253.

<sup>34</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>36</sup>Clifford Leech, John Ford and the Drama of His Time (London, 1957), p. 23.

<sup>37</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 196.

<sup>38</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 16, capitalizes The Golden Meane.

<sup>39</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, pp. 11-12; H. J. Oliver, The Problem of John Ford (Carlton, Victoria, 1955), p. 19.

<sup>40</sup>Oliver, p. 15; Leech, p. 26.

<sup>41</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 20. See also Parrott, p. 251.

<sup>42</sup>A. W. Ward, A History of English Dramatic Literature (New York, 1899), iii, 77-78.

<sup>43</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 22.

<sup>44</sup>John Ford, ed. Havelock Ellis (New York, 1957), p. xi. Gifford-Dyce, ii, 222.

<sup>45</sup>See the prologues to The Lover's Melancholy, ll. 5-10, and The Francies Chaste and Noble, ll. 1-3.

<sup>46</sup>See the prologues to The Lover's Melancholy, ll. 14-16, and The Broken Heart, ll. 3-8.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., iii, 7. It is possible that these lines were written not by Ford but by the actor Theophilus Bird, whose name follows the prologue.

<sup>48</sup>Stuart Pratt Sherman, "Ford's Contribution to the Decadence of the Drama" in Shaping Men and Women (Garden City, 1928), p.204.

<sup>49</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, pp. 26-27.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p.215.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p.27.

<sup>52</sup>Ellis, p. viii.

<sup>53</sup>Ward, iii,73.

<sup>54</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p.27.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p.28.

<sup>56</sup>Sherman, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and The Broken Heart, p. xviii.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, pp.28,215.

<sup>59</sup>Bertram Lloyd, "An Unprinted Poem by John Ford (?)" Review of English Studies, I (April, 1925), 217-218. The poem is in the British Museum, Egerton MS. 2725.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p.218.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>X.X., "John Ford the Dramatist," Notes and Queries, 4th Series, XI (May 17, 1873), 403.

<sup>63</sup>Gifford, xliv.

<sup>64</sup>Lloyd, p.218.

<sup>65</sup>Leech, p.126. Davril, p.62.

<sup>66</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p.31.

<sup>67</sup>J.P.F., p.104.

<sup>68</sup>See Gifford, p. xliv, and J.P.F., p.104.

<sup>69</sup>Davril, p.46, n. 4.

<sup>70</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p.1.

<sup>71</sup>J.P.F., p.104.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MILIEU OF JOHN FORD

John Ford lived through some of the most tumultuous hours of England's history. Born two years before Philip's Armada perished in the English seas, he knew those final years of greatness under Elizabeth. He knew also some of the darker moments of the century: after passing through the reign of James and watching his countrymen grow restive under Stuart rule, he lived at least long enough under Charles to see the deluge of blood about to break over the head of that unfortunate prince. To see the age as it was will help us to understand the man who wrote of it and for it.

The milieu of Jacobean and Caroline England was varied, turbulent, passionate. Foreign kings ruled England, and their alien political ideas insured that their reigns would not be uneventful. Religious difficulties plagued the nation: the old fear and hatred of Catholicism remained, and the growing power of the Puritans added to the anxiety of the state. In the midst of all these fears, the age produced an inspired translation of the Scriptures. It also produced William Laud and Oliver Cromwell.

Religious differences produced sharp divisions between certain elements in the population: the upper and lower



classes drew further and further apart; the sobriety of many Puritan sects clashed strongly with the gaiety of the court. Other significant social movements occurred also. The merchant class continued to increase in power and respect. The position of woman in society improved (not without opposition), and old ideas concerning the relationship of the sexes were given new emphasis.

In art and thought Stuart England continued the Tudor Renaissance. Francis Bacon gave new directions to science and new life to philosophy. Thomas Hobbes was there to listen and to learn--though not yet to teach. In the drama William Shakespeare reached the height of his powers, Ben Jonson produced his finest plays, and a score of other talented playwrights gave added vigor to the stage. In poetry John Donne and his followers were forcing dynamic new requirements on English verse, while the youthful John Milton, working along more traditional lines, was proving himself a poet worthy of regard. And through all the latter years of the period--the hope and fear, the joy and dread of revolution was in the air.

For the most part Ford comments only incidentally on the major religious issues of his time; his references may be noted in passing as we look at his various writings. His works do reflect a considerable interest in matters aesthetic and intellectual, but these elements may be dealt with sufficiently in our examinations of the works themselves. Two

other aspects of the milieu, the political and the social, require somewhat more detailed attention.

#### THE POLITICAL MILIEU

Ford's family was evidently associated with the profession of law for generations. At the time the poet arrived at the Middle Temple, several of his relations were either in residence at the Inns of Court or were more actively engaged in the work of justice. The most notable to history is his uncle, Sir John Popham, the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench. Ford's exact opinion of his uncle is unknown; but Popham did figure importantly in the history of the age, and certain aspects of his career are worth our notice, particularly since he was much involved in the affairs of several men of whom Ford writes--such men as James I, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, and Sir Walter Raleigh. Ford refers to Raleigh at least once, Essex several times, and James Stuart on many occasions. His writings on all three of these men are an important part of a study of his ideas and principles.

Ostensibly, Ford's attitude toward his sovereign is favorable; but considering the times, his printed opinions would more or less have to be. It does seem likely that Ford's views might have been considerably influenced by certain opponents of James--in particular Sir Edward Coke, the chief defender of English personal liberties. Also,

the differences between James and the poet-courtier Sir Thomas Overbury seem of great importance in determining the significance of some of Ford's political statements. For all of these reasons--plus the fact that the Inns of Court, Ford's home for more than a decade, were a hotbed of political and judicial controversy throughout the years of the Stuarts--it will be purposeful to take a close look at the political milieu of John Ford.

In 1602, the year in which John Ford is believed to have entered the law schools in London, Elizabeth Tudor was still the sovereign of England. But in another year the aged queen was to die, and England was to invite a foreign prince to rule her. The new king, James VI of Scotland, had learned much from a wise tutor, but he had failed to heed certain political lessons that would have proved of inestimable value to him and to his heirs in their new kingdom. As a result of James' political theories the Parliament and courts of England were compelled to oppose their new king with legal involvements that were to make the reign of James at times a far from happy one.

Bishop Stephen Gardiner had expressed the English theory of the proper relationship of the sovereign and the law when, in the presence of Henry VIII, he had answered Thomas Cromwell's question of whether the maxim quod principi placuit applied to the King of England. Considering the company Gardiner was in, the question was a

touchy one, but his answer was skillfully designed. He said he "had read indeed of kings that had their wills always received for law," but he told Henry that "the form of his reign, to make the laws his will, was more sure and quiet, and by this form of government ye be established, and it is agreeable with the nature of your people."<sup>1</sup> Both Henry and Elizabeth followed this principle, one which recognized the supremacy of the law.

In De Jure Regni apud Scotos, George Buchanan, once the tutor of the Scottish prince, dared to advocate this same theory of social contract. He stated that "justice is to be maintained rather by laws than by kings; hence it is that the rulers, originally unlimited in power, have with the development of enlightenment been always subject to law."<sup>2</sup> The way of De Jure Regni was the way of English law; it was not the way of James Stuart. When James became King of England, he chose to ignore the cautious policy of his former teacher, becoming instead the zealous defender of a theory of sovereignty far more absolute than any his Tudor predecessors had dared to substitute for justice, the theory of the "Divine Right of Kings."<sup>3</sup>

Five years before James came to England, he had published The True Law of Free Monarchies, in which the law of divine right was outlined "complete in every detail."<sup>4</sup> Therein, James held himself to be above the law, though he made a token acknowledgment of it: "I have at length

proved, that the king is above the law...I have said, a good king will frame all his actions to be according to the law; yet is hee not bound thereto but of his good will..."<sup>5</sup>

The True Law of Free Monarchies was not published until 1603, and then only anonymously; but James' theories were equally obvious in Basilikon Doron, a book of instructions for his son and heir, published in 1599. An introductory sonnet presented the argument, and this was repeated when James cautioned his son to love God because God "made you a little God, to sit on his Throne, and rule over other men."<sup>6</sup> This work was known to Ford; he referred to it in A Line of Life.

Whether or not his new southern subjects were familiar with these works mattered little, for James wasted no time in acquainting them with his ideas. In his opening speech to Parliament on March 19, 1603, the King expressed his theory in rather startling phraseology: "I am the Husband, and the whole Isle is my lawfull Wife; I am the Head, and it is my Body."<sup>7</sup> With these words he joined England and Scotland under his aegis, declaring: "What God hath conjoyned then, let no man separate."<sup>8</sup>

James also made his relationship to God explicitly clear to his first Parliament: "The state of monarchy is the supremest thing upon earth: for Kings are not only God's lieutenants upon earth and sit upon God's throne, but even by

God Himself they are called gods."<sup>9</sup> Therefore, there could be no limitations upon the authority of the king other than those established by God, and James let it be known that he intended to rule without check from the Parliament, the people, or the common law: "As to dispute what God may do is blasphemy, so it is sedition in subjects to dispute what a king may do in height of his power. I will not be content that my power be disputed on."<sup>10</sup> James did, in fact, inform the House of Commons that it sat not by right but only by his grace, that it "derived all matters of privilege from him."<sup>11</sup>

The men of Commons listened to the king at length and then informed him that he himself was "misinformed." The members maintained that Parliament existed by right and not by royal grace. And they added that they would not be content to see the king's power go undisputed: "We hold it an ancient, general and undoubted right of Parliament to debate freely all matters which properly concern the subject and his right or state; which freedom of debate being once foreclosed, the essence of the liberty of Parliament is withal dissolved."<sup>12</sup>

On March 21, 1609, almost exactly six years after the king's initial speech to Parliament, the lords and commons were again addressed by James. Long residence in England had not modified James' views of the royal prerogative:

Kings are justly called Gods, for that they exercise a manner or resemblance of Divine power upon earth: For if you will consider the Attributes to God, you shall see how they agree in the person of a king. God hath power to create, or destroy, make, or unmake at his pleasure, to give life, or send death, to judge all, and to be judged nor accomptable to none: To raise low things, and to make high things low at his pleasure, and to God are both soule and body due. And the like power have kings: they make and unmake their subjects: they have power of raising, and casting downe: of life and death: Judges over all their subjects, and in all causes, and yet accomptable to none but God only.<sup>13</sup>

And so the extremist doctrine continued to be hurled into the faces of the English. From first to last the theory of divine right was the dominant doctrine of all James' political writings.<sup>14</sup>

With Elizabeth's death James had become the king of a people who had rarely permitted themselves to be coerced. Furthermore, his new dominion had not yet become fully calmed after decades of almost constant fear of foreign wars and internal rebellions. His tactless policy and rash assumption of such an extreme prerogative as that of divine sanction could not have been more ill advised nor more poorly timed. If his theories had remained only theories, all might have been well. But James did not long delay in opposing his actions to English law: at Newark in 1603, on his journey from Scotland to London to accept the crown, James took it upon himself to order a highwayman hanged without the least semblance of a trial--

an assertion of royal will which the shocked English were not desirous of seeing enacted again.<sup>15</sup> But this was merely the first of many incidents in which the personal will of the Scottish king was opposed to the principles of English law.

The early actions of James made it evident that he would attempt to put his theories of absolutism into effect; that he was not able to do so was largely due to the efforts of Sir Edward Coke, one of the greatest figures in English jurisprudence. In one instance after another Coke opposed himself, his court, and English law to the will of James.

Sir Edward Coke, Attorney-General under Elizabeth and for a while under James, resigned that office in 1606, and became Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas (taking as a preliminary the degree of Sergeant-at-law, in which ceremony Ford's uncle, Sir John Popham, took a part, placing the party robes on the new Sergeant).<sup>16</sup> Coke's new position as a chief justice gave him opportunity to enforce his ideas concerning the supremacy of common law--ideas which accorded ill with the claims of the Star Chamber and with James' assertions of absolute power.

In Coke's opinion the supreme power in the state was not the king but the statutes of common law, and therefore English judges were to work uncontrolled by anyone or anything except that law. But in James' doctrine the will of the king was supreme, the king could make or unmake laws



by proclamation, or break laws if he chose, and at all times judges were to be subservient to the Crown. In every case the royal prerogative was supreme.<sup>17</sup>

Conflict between James and Coke was inevitable; they did, in fact, clash continually. And Coke, although he suffered dismissal and disgrace for his opposition, won his battle for the recognition of the common law. The opening decades of the seventeenth century were a critical turning point in the constitutional history of the English nation, for it was then that it was determined that Englishmen would not allow themselves to be governed by a king alone and would submit only to the rule of a king acting in concord with Parliament and the law.<sup>18</sup> Sir Edward Coke, aligned with the king's opposition in Parliament, made the medieval common law victor over its foes, and made it capable of ruling a modern nation.<sup>19</sup> Coke proved on the bench that the common law was the people's greatest defense against the vagaries of arbitrary power of kingship--and that success made Sir Edward Coke immensely popular.<sup>20</sup>

As the foremost champion of English liberty, Chief Justice Coke--former student of Clifford's Inn, former Reader (Professor of Law) at Lyon's Inn, former Reader at the Inner Temple<sup>21</sup>--was lionized by the students at the temples of law in the years between 1606 and 1616, while his clashes with James were occurring.<sup>22</sup> John Ford was in residence in some capacity at the Inns of Court as early as 1602 and as late

as 1617. It is impossible that Ford was not involved in some way, at least emotionally, in this matter of so much importance to his profession and his country.

Ford's precise sympathies concerning the long battle between James and Coke cannot be known. There are some reasons why he might not have been fond of Coke. While Attorney-General, Coke had had several clashes with Ford's uncle, Sir John Popham, Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench from 1592 until his death in 1607. However, these minor disputes were purely professional ones; and since Popham, a staunch supporter of the Crown, died very shortly after Coke began his campaign against the king, the two justices had scant opportunity to clash over legal ideologies. As Ford's own opinions regarding his uncle (who rumors said had once been a highwayman<sup>23</sup>) are unknown, it is impossible to determine how Ford's feelings toward Coke might have been influenced by Coke's opposition to his relative.

In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, it would be natural to assume that Ford's affections lay with Coke rather than with James. It is likely that the young law student would have shared his countryman's fears of an alien king's arbitrary powers; Ford was probably as insular-minded and as chauvinistic as young men usually are. The possibility always remains that Ford was an exception to the rule, but this is doubtful and the rule is especially

significant:

Coke had not striven in vain. He had turned the minds of the young gentlemen at the Inns of Court who watched him from afar with fear and reverence, to contemplate a new idea of the constitutional function and of the political affinities of their profession, which they were destined in their generation to develop in a hundred ways, as counsel for England gone to war with her king.<sup>24</sup>

Coke and his followers won their major battle to make the common law a safeguard against the prerogative of the Crown, but on many smaller matters James was able to subvert the courts to his purposes. After seeing his will denied time after time by the ruling of his judges, James adopted the policy of making the justices meet him privately before rendering any decisions touching on his prerogative. The fear of meeting James in personal interviews forced most of the judges to yield to his demands. Coke was the most notable exception, and Coke was subsequently dismissed and disgraced. Thereafter, the king had less trouble with the courts.<sup>25</sup>

But James was never able to override Parliament. From the first that body had objected to the king's procedure, and it continued to do so all the days of his reign. James never understood his Parliament, and he needed its help more than he knew.

The king had money troubles at least as early as 1605,<sup>26</sup> and he could never force Parliament to solve them for him in the ways he desired. James dismissed Parliament in 1610.

He did not summon it to meet again until 1614, and then he chose to dismiss it almost immediately--even before it could vote taxes. The king then attempted to raise money by issuing appeals for benevolences, free gifts of money from the people. This method failed: the amount collected was extremely small and contributors were few<sup>27</sup>--even though Coke gave £2000 from his own pocket, showing he would support the throne as far as his conscience would allow.<sup>28</sup> James got little help from his other justices on this matter. In an attempt to increase the amount of benevolences he instructed his sheriffs and justices of the peace to use persuasion on his behalf. The reaction of the justices in Devonshire, Ford's own county, was typical; there the officials refused to incur "the just blame of after ages" by supporting the king's plan, though they announced they "would always be willing to give in accordance with the ancient and lawful customs of the kingdom."<sup>29</sup> A mere £40,000 was collected outside London and the court.<sup>30</sup> This small sum shows how well the English country people understood the constitutional differences between the king and Parliament.<sup>31</sup> England had, in fact, gone to war with her king.

Opposition to James had not always been of such a peaceful nature. There were many factions in England who hated and feared James from the start. One such group wished to depose the king and supplant him with his cousin

Arabella Stuart. The aim of another faction was simpler: they wanted to blast James to kingdom-come. Thus, the infamous Gunpowder Plot was born.

The plot was supposedly instigated by English Catholics who wished to destroy the Scottish Protestant on the throne. While in Scotland awaiting Elizabeth's death, James had promised fair treatment to Catholics should they support his claims to the throne of England; but after he had become Elizabeth's successor, his persecutions of the sect gave the Catholics no hope that their torments would be alleviated during his reign.<sup>32</sup> Their plot failed disastrously, and before the Crown's desire for vengeance was satisfied, blood had been shed more than once, and at least one innocent man had been doomed to the Tower of London. The severe results of the catastrophe were the inevitable ones: increased national hatred for all Catholics, increased harshness in the penal codes, and increased persecutions.<sup>33</sup>

There are many brief references to religious controversy and political events in most of the early writings of John Ford. Christ's Bloody Sweat, for instance, contains some fierce lines against the Catholics and, in particular, the Jesuits,<sup>34</sup> who received much of the blame for the Gunpowder Plot. But the most significant of the works in this regard are The Golden Mean and A Line of Life. Both concern, directly or indirectly, James I of England.

The Golden Mean is dedicated to Henry Percy, one of a long line of unfortunate men to bear that name. Percy, the Earl of Northumberland, though doubtless innocent of any complicity in the Gunpowder Plot, was imprisoned by James for fifteen years on charges of treason. Northumberland's confinement began in 1605. The Golden Mean appeared in 1613 with the earl's name omitted from the dedication; but the second edition of the work, which appeared the next year, was openly dedicated. The dedications most assuredly imply Ford's dissatisfaction with James's tyranny.

A Line of Life followed in 1620. It is in three parts, delineating the qualities of a private man, a public man, and a good man respectively. James is mentioned by name in the third section. Ford praises the king highly for his nobler qualities--such as his desire for peace in his own realm and in Continental Europe. But greatness to Ford consists of goodness--and he wishes that James would conduct himself in such a way that he might be remembered not as James the Great but as James the Good. In the first two sections he had shown James models of public and private virtue--qualities in which James frequently showed himself to be lacking. In the light of the divine right of king's controversy, one of Ford's sentences seems extremely significant: "No man can be or should be reputed a god"(402).<sup>35</sup>

There are other passages of considerable interest. The statement that "there was never any public mischief

attempted in a state...but religion was their colour to effect it"<sup>36</sup> probably has nothing whatsoever to do with the various machinations of the Gunpowder Plot, nothing whatsoever to do with the fact that James, in need of revenue, found Henry Percy, a man of strong Catholic sympathies, guilty of treason and did not execute him but did fine him £30,000, the largest fine every levied against an Englishman to that time.<sup>37</sup> The statement may have nothing at all to do with these specific events, but it is as true a perception of the Machiavellian policy of the age as any such generalization is likely to be.

There are reasons justifying the reading of such hidden meanings in Ford. In another section of A Line of Life he speaks of secret murderers, calling them "poisoners of virtue."<sup>38</sup> These three words are full of direct allusion, for Ford knew, as we shall see later, that virtue had been poisoned in London in 1613.

Had James desired to be a good man rather than a little God he would have had a happier reign. As it was, from 1603 to 1625, England knew unceasing discontent.

Nor did the death of James in 1625 ease the tension existing between the king and the people of England, for the incendiary doctrine of the divine right of kings was the legacy which James bequeathed to his son. Probably Charles was not so secure a believer in the doctrine as his father had been; but nonetheless after succeeding

to the crown he said, "I must avow that I owe the account of my actions to God alone," and at his trial in 1649, he denied that there existed any power on earth under whose jurisdiction he could be tried.<sup>39</sup>

Charles was no despot, for all his faults; but he refused to accept Parliament as his master and dissolved that body in 1629. He was then faced with his father's old problem of raising monies; his solutions to the problem did not follow the letter of English law. Some of the taxes levied were obviously illegal; others, though legal, were unfair, falling heavily on individuals and small classes. For instance, old and obsolete medieval laws, impotent for centuries, were revived, enabling heavy taxes to be levied against the landed gentry, the class into which Ford had been born.<sup>40</sup>

Private property was taken by the king's justices in accordance with his proclamations, other property was commandeered for governmental use, and the government fixed prices on certain commodities. Thus, it is evident that private property and individual rights were not sacred to Charles. The desire to reduce the king's powers was shared by all Englishmen; but nowhere was it greater than in the minds of Ford's class, the gentry, the group suffering most from Charles' arbitrary rule.<sup>41</sup>

The Stuarts had gradually been able to fill the benches of the higher courts with men who would do their



bidding, and naturally the decisions of such courts did nothing to settle the unrest in Caroline England. The Court of High Commission, a mixed group of laymen and clergy, which had "savoured of the Roman Inquisition" even under Elizabeth, did not improve under Charles; it was thoroughly detested by the English. The Star Chamber, a secular tribunal, was the monarch's pocket court. It was specifically designed to handle Charles' enemies; to do so, it had been empowered to dispense with the rules of evidence and procedure which were supposed to protect Englishmen brought to the bar of justice. Of the thirty-one cases tried in the Star Chamber between the Easter Term of 1631 and the Trinity Term of 1632, at least twenty-nine could have been handled by other courts--as a chamber of justice, the Star Chamber had become a mockery.<sup>42</sup> The Council of the North had been empowered to "stop proceedings in the Courts of Common Law."<sup>43</sup> This court and other prerogative courts like it were distrusted and disliked by the lawyers of England and by the county judges who had considerable regard for the prestige of the landed gentry, whose fortunes were being greatly affected by the leanings of the prerogative courts.<sup>44</sup> The Petition of Right was passed in 1628, but it proved to be incapable of guaranteeing individual rights against the bias of the Stuart courts. As a consequence one of the first acts of the Long Parliament in 1642 was the abolition of many of the disgraceful courts of Charles' reign.<sup>45</sup>

Despite his frequent subversion of his judges, Charles had great difficulties with men from the legal profession. Old Sir Edward Coke had not held legal office since 1616, but he was still around to haunt Charles as a member of the House of Commons. Coke led the fight for the Petition of Right in 1628. And in 1631, when Coke was in the process of publishing a book, Charles commanded the Lord Keeper to prevent its publication--the king's reason for this action is a vivid testimony to Coke's powers: "He [Coke] is held too great an oracle amongst the people, and they may be misled by anything that carries such an authority as all things do that he either speaks or writes."<sup>47</sup>

The lawyers became even more unpopular with the Crown when one of their membership, the Puritan William Prynne, embarrassed them by publishing Histrionomastix in 1632. Dedicated to the lawyers at Lincoln's Inn, this attack on the stage, with its allusions to the part the royal family had played in furthering court drama, cost Prynne his ears and doubtless put his fellow templars on the defensive (Ford attacks Prynne in the dedication of Love's Sacrifice, but his references are not political).<sup>48</sup> Their attitude toward the king's policy may have become more conciliatory for a while, but Charles was never able to win the lawyers of England to his side. The issues were too great, too well-defined for that to happen.





and mercy. It might well be true that in this comparison of the policies of Charles' Scottish ancestor and his English predecessor, Ford was attempting to show his sovereign the superiority of Tudor policy and the weaknesses of Stuart administration.

The Stuart kings stood almost alone in their devotion to the theory of divine right. No prominent treatise published in the long period between 1603 and 1660 undertook to defend the doctrine--it was that alien to the English mind. Only the Patriarcha of Sir Robert Filmer, which contained an orthodox statement of the doctrine, was written in those fifty-seven years, and it was not published until twenty years after the Restoration. On the other hand, hundreds and hundreds of pamphlets were published which advocated manhood suffrage and proclaimed that men were born with inherent rights to freedom.<sup>52</sup>

Thus, it is fully evident that the Stuart philosophy lay outside the temper of the time. Actually, James claimed no more power than Elizabeth had, in fact, enjoyed; but he never thought to adopt the policy of suaviter in modo, fortiter in re, which might have helped him to achieve his goals.<sup>53</sup> Charles was so convinced of the justice of his cause that even on the scaffold he still denied that the people had any right whatsoever to a voice in their government.<sup>54</sup> Charles was not a monstrous tyrant, but he did attempt to rule as an absolute monarch--and that attempt cost him his life.

Before leaving the legal aspects of the milieu, it might be well to look at some of the major trials of the period. Early in the century two trials occurred that Ford must have been interested in, for among other things, each involved both Popham and Coke. The first was the trial of Lord Essex for treason against Elizabeth in 1601. Popham was both presiding judge and an antagonistic witness against Essex. Coke, then attorney-general, was the vituperative prosecutor of the lord who had been the patron of Coke's great rival, Sir Francis Bacon.<sup>55</sup> One example of Coke's insolence is this assault on Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex: "But now, in God's most just judgment, he of this earldom shall be 'ROBERT THE LAST,' that of the kingdom thought to be 'ROBERT THE FIRST.'" <sup>56</sup> Despite his own position as witness, Popham's attitude toward the unfortunate Essex was exemplary--he delivered his evidence temperately and cautiously, and he recommended a pardon for the man who had held him prisoner during the revolt. Far different was the conduct of Sir Francis Bacon, ever the political opportunist. Bacon gave evidence against his former benefactor and patron. Essex was obviously guilty; Bacon's testimony was not needed, but he gave it and gave it viciously.<sup>57</sup> Lord Essex was, of course, found guilty and sentenced to be beheaded. He then confessed his guilt and accepted his fate. His emotions remained under control at all times as he walked to the block and knelt to receive the headsman's blow.<sup>58</sup>

Ford's allusions to Essex are brief ones in Fame's Memorial, the elegy for the Earl of Devonshire. Since Essex was the brother of the Countess of Devonshire<sup>59</sup> and since both Essex and Mountjoy suffered greatly in return for their victories for England, the allusions to Essex are fully appropriate. Early in the poem Ford states that the souls of the two brothers have been united; he says of Mountjoy:

Thy soul's- united Essex for whose sake  
Thou didst advance thy love, which did inherit  
The dear reversion of his elate spirit:

(288)<sup>60</sup>

A later passage stresses the friendship between the two noblemen and the sorrow each must have felt at the other's fall:

So mayst thou, knightly youth, who wert his  
friend,  
Companion to his chamber and his bed:  
His loves much largess did to thee extend,  
And made the rumour of thy name be spread  
Even to thy native west where thou wert bred:  
Ah, do not him forget, who honour'd thee  
With perfect rites of mutual amity.

Nor canst thou stop the flood-gates of thine  
Great peer of worth and state, who griev'd thy  
For peerless Essex' strife who sought to rise  
In virtuous honour, which procur'd thy fall;  
Devonshire bewail'd thy danger's bitter gall:  
Then, in requital of much more than this,  
Sigh thou for him; still love and cherish  
his.

As much, grave patron of sage wisdom's lore,  
Mayst thou lament thy friend's untimely race,  
Who ever favour'd thee 'cause thou hast bore,  
Whiles he was Ireland's viceroy, thy great place





The poet's high regard for Essex is evident. He has Mountjoy conquering Irleand because that land had "wrought the downfall of his worthiest friend."

Ford's respect for Essex may have been increased by his own friendship with Barnabe Barnes, a poet who had served under Essex in the campaign against the Spanish in 1591 and who had praised Essex highly in his Four Books of Offices, for which Ford wrote a commendatory poem, possibly his first published work.

But Ford also admired "the nobleness of perfect virtue in extremes" (the phrase is in the subtitle of The Golden Mean), and it seems likely that Ford had been impressed by accounts of Essex's nobility in his moments of trial. Essex had borne his fate as nobly as he had lived.

One writer on Ford, recalling that Sir John Popham had been held prisoner by Essex and that he had taken a part against Essex in the trial, has proposed the following problem: "One cannot help wondering how, if they ever came to his eyes, the old man enjoyed his young kinsman's verses."<sup>63</sup> We have seen Popham's own kindnesses to Essex and his entreaties on the doomed earl's behalf. He would not have been offended by his nephew's praise of a man whom he himself praised openly two years after the execution: "My Lord of Essex, that noble earl that is gone, who, if he had not been carried away by others, had lived in honor to this day among us..."<sup>64</sup> Both Ford and Popham agree that "foul

envy's hate" led to Essex's downfall. If the sources of this hatred and envy need be looked for, they could be found in such men as Robert Cecil, a chief minister under both Elizabeth and James, Henry Howard, the ambitious Earl of Northampton, and perhaps even Sir Walter Raleigh.

In the Essex trial Sir Walter Raleigh took a part against the doomed earl. Later he wrote a letter to Lord Cecil advising that Essex be executed summarily. As Captain of the Guard Raleigh was present at the execution of Lord Essex.<sup>65</sup> He did not know then how soon his own day in court was to come.

The trial of Sir Walter Raleigh for his part in the attempt to gain the English throne for Lady Arabella Stuart occurred in 1603. Again Popham presided and Coke, still Attorney-General, handled the prosecution. Coke, as was his wont, brutally insulted his victim, and Raleigh replied with some heat. Popham then spoke, bidding both to be patient: "Sir Walter Raleigh, Mr. Attorney speaketh out of the zeal of his duty for the service of the king, and you for your life; be valiant on both sides"<sup>66</sup> (It is interesting that biographers of Raleigh take Popham's words as an intrusion on Coke's behalf).<sup>67</sup>

Coke was making his first appearance as a prosecutor since the accession of James, and he was in a difficult situation: Sir Walter Raleigh was no common prisoner, and there was little real evidence with which to gain a conviction.

He depended, therefore, upon invective. One passage from the trial record will provide sufficient evidence of Coke's brutal manner:

Coke: I will prove you the notorious  
traitor that ever held up his  
hand at the bar of any court.  
Raleigh: Your words cannot condemn me;  
my innocency is my defense.  
Prove one of these things where-  
with you have charged me, and I  
will confess the whole indictment...  
Coke: Nay, I will prove all: Thou art a  
monster: thou hast an English face,  
but a Spanish heart.  
Raleigh: Let me answer for myself.  
Coke: Thou shalt not.<sup>68</sup>

Finally, Coke was asked by one of the Commissioners to allow Raleigh to speak. To this Coke replied, "If I may not patiently be heard, you will encourage traitors and discourage us." Coke then sat down and refused to speak again until "urged and entreated" by the Commissioners to do so. Then he continued his attack of Raleigh.<sup>69</sup>

Raleigh also had a lengthy exchange with Lord Chief Justice Popham. The charge against Raleigh was based merely on the word of a single witness: Henry Cobham, Lord Brooke. Raleigh, conducting his own defense, debated several points of law with Popham concerning the legality of charges based on such slight evidence, and naturally Raleigh lost. He then requested that his accuser be brought into the court to confront him and deliver his damning testimony in Raleigh's presence. Popham answered, "You have no law for it."<sup>70</sup>

Raleigh was found guilty of treason after a deliberation of only fifteen minutes by a jury of his peers (including Charles Blount, the Earl of Devonshire, and Henry Howard, the Earl of Northampton).<sup>71</sup> Chief Justice Popham pronounced sentence, condemning Raleigh to be hanged, drawn, and quartered.<sup>72</sup>

When the trial began, Raleigh was a hated man. He had, in fact, had stones and mud, as well as hisses and curses, thrown at him on his way to the trial at Wolversey.<sup>73</sup> But his opponents' relentless attack in the courtroom and his own noble bearing under that adversity changed public opinion. Perhaps this new wave of popularity helped to influence his long stay of execution. Popham's dread sentence was not carried out until October 29, 1618.<sup>74</sup>

Ford's reference to Raleigh appeared in 1620 in A Line of Life; it was perhaps prompted by the knight's execution a short time before. Raleigh is mentioned in the section of the work which delineates the qualities a private man ought to have. Ford contrasts Raleigh with John Lord Harington "in the use of the gifts of their mind."<sup>75</sup> Raleigh loses by the comparison; Ford considers that Raleigh, for all his greatness, had unworthy faults of mind: "behold in him the strange character of a mere man, a man subject to as many changes of resolution as resolute to be the instrument of change; politic, and yet in policy so unsteady, that his too much apprehension was the foil of his judgment."<sup>76</sup>

Yet, Ford finds much in Raleigh that is worthy of praise; he calls Raleigh "a man known and well deserving to be known; a man endowed not with common endowments, being stored with the best of nature's furniture..."<sup>77</sup> And there is a note of sympathy for Raleigh, a man who had experienced both good and bad fortunes "so feelingly and apparently, that it may truly be controverted whether he were more happy or miserable..."<sup>78</sup> Unfortunately, there is a lacuna in the text and the precise moral that Ford draws from the life and death of Raleigh cannot be known.

Undoubtedly the character of Sir Walter Raleigh, a man of many talents and some vices, was one that would have been of great interest to Ford. Like Giovanni in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, Raleigh was a man of learning, learning which had carried him to the verge of atheism, and perhaps beyond. Actually, Popham's sentence sounds as though he were dooming Raleigh for atheism rather than for treason:

You have been taxed by the world with the defense of the most heathenish and blasphemous opinions, which I list not to repeat, because Christian ears cannot endure to hear them, nor the authors and maintainers of them be suffered to live in any Christian commonwealth.... Let not any devil persuade you to think there is no eternity in heaven, for if you think thus, you shall find eternity in hell fire.<sup>79</sup>

But Raleigh had many virtues too. He bore the insults of Coke and his other accusers nobly. Sir Thomas Overbury spoke of Raleigh as "humble but not prostrate,...affable but not fawning,...persuading with reason, not distemperedly

importuning with conjuration."<sup>80</sup> And Raleigh went to his death years later with equal equanimity.<sup>81</sup> He was another example of "the nobility of perfect virtue in extremes."

The trial of the Earl of Northumberland is another example of Jacobean justice. Henry Percy, the ninth earl of Northumberland--the brother of the sonneteer William Percy and brother-in-law of the same Earl of Essex whose trial we have already noted<sup>82</sup>--was a man of strong Catholic leanings, although ostensibly he conformed to the Anglican faith. He was implicated in the Gunpowder Plot primarily because his cousin Thomas Percy was a leader, indeed the chief organizer, of it.<sup>83</sup> Thomas Percy's visit to the earl on November 4, 1605, the day before Guy Fawkes was captured beneath the House of Lords, was interpreted by the government as involving the earl in "misprision of treason."<sup>84</sup> Northumberland was questioned on November 15 (by Popham) and November 23, 1605, and then confined to the Tower on November 27, where he remained until June 27, 1606, when he was brought to trial in the Star Chamber,<sup>85</sup> that room of lost causes.

Coke opened the case with a vitriolic harangue filled with vague innuendo concerning Percy's part in various plots and intrigues of the past years. Coke's charges ended with the assertion that the earl had placed Thomas Percy, whom he knew to be a Catholic, among the Gentlemen Pensioners, thus putting "about the person of the King a man who was engaged in plotting his death."<sup>86</sup> This was the major part

of the prosecution's case--the Crown did not even accuse the earl of having been aware of a plot against the king's life.

Northumberland easily proved that he had had nothing to do with the admission of Thomas Percy to a place among the Gentlemen Pensioners. He thus refuted the most serious charge against him, and no doubt he expected to be released. Instead he was fined the staggering sum of £30,000 and was returned to the Tower,<sup>87</sup> there to remain for over fifteen years, until July 21, 1621.

Five years after the first trial, in February of 1611, an anonymous tract was published in which the author professed knowledge of Henry Percy's "horrible Popish treasons."<sup>88</sup> Northumberland was brought to trial again, where he was denounced before the king by a man named Timothy Elkes. Elkes' testimony was so ridiculous that James--even James--ordered him to cease speaking. The charges were dismissed as absurd and baseless, and Coke wrote that "the least men acquit Northumberland of all blame."<sup>89</sup> But despite all this Lord Percy was returned to the Tower to spend another decade of his life. Such was the justice of James.

This second trial and most of Northumberland's other troubles were the result of the jealousy and hatred of Robert Cecil, the hunchbacked Earl of Salisbury and James' chief minister. Cecil's venom had already struck at Essex and Raleigh.<sup>90</sup> When the earl's death in 1614 removed his great influence from James, England suffered no great loss.

Northumberland made the most of his life in the Tower; he did in fact make a prison into a "home." He paved and rearranged the walk outside his quarters at his own expense. He introduced "tennis, battledore, and even fencing" into the Tower, and had a bowling alley constructed--all to remove the melancholy of his fellow prisoners. He revived Raleigh from depression, and the result was The History of the World. A contemporary wrote that "Northumberland, the Maecenas of the age, converted that abode of misery into a Temple of the Muses."<sup>91</sup>

Northumberland continued to keep his reputation as a scientist--he was known as "the wizard earl"--from being forgotten. He surrounded himself with men of scientific and literary taste--among them a group of three whom Raleigh styled "the Earl's Three Magi": Walter Warner, Robert Hues, and Thomas Harriot, the famed mathematician and astronomer.<sup>92</sup>

Ford's tract The Golden Mean, first appearing in 1613, was probably begun about the time that the earl's second trial was underway. Certainly a man such as Ford would see much to admire in a man of Northumberland's character--Henry Percy was a prime example of nobility retaining, even enlarging, its virtue in extreme situations.

One of the onlookers at the trial of Sir Walter Raleigh was Sir Thomas Overbury, who was to figure posthumously a few years later in one of the most sensational trials of the century. Overbury's murder and the subsequent trial doubtless received close attention from John Ford. Overbury, himself



a poet, might possibly have been an acquaintance of Ford, for both had been at the Middle Temple.<sup>93</sup> At any rate, the young law student had a great deal of admiration for the dead man: he published a work entitled Sir Thomas Overbury's Ghost Containing the History of his Life and Untimely Death in 1615 and a commendatory poem which was prefixed to all editions of Overbury's famous poem The Wife, beginning with the eighth edition in 1616.<sup>94</sup>

Some of the backgrounds of the Overbury case are still shadowy, but the essential facts are clear. In 1609 Robert Carr, "a weak, grasping, and illiterate"<sup>95</sup> descendent of a respected Scottish house, began a spectacular rise in court as the favorite of James. By 1612 he had become Lord Carr of Bransprath, Viscount Rochester, and Lord High Treasurer of Scotland. Gradually thereafter he was made a Knight of the Garter, the Earl of Somerset, Lord Chamberlain, and then finally, after the death of Robert Cecil, the first minister of the land.<sup>96</sup>

Perhaps Somerset did have enough intelligence to recognize his own limitations, for he chose "a man of a strong mind and considerable genius,"<sup>97</sup> Sir Thomas Overbury, as his adviser. All was well until Carr began an affair with Frances Howard, the wife of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, the son of the famed Lord Essex. The Howard woman began divorce proceedings against Devereux in 1613, and Carr planned to marry her. Overbury objected strenuously to his friend's plans and

made pointed references to the character of his paramour.<sup>98</sup> The Wife, which outlines the character of an ideal mate for a man, was probably written at this time--to acquaint Rochester with the differences between Frances Howard and an ideal wife. The poem circulated in the court circles; and it was accompanied by a new example of the character sketches which Overbury had already made famous--the title of the new "Character" was "The Mistress Made a Wife."<sup>99</sup> Frances Howard never forgave Overbury for his insults. When her marriage to Lord Somerset took place, Sir Thomas Overbury was not alive to see it.

Overbury died mysteriously on September 15, 1613, three months before Robert Carr wed the woman of his choosing. The body was hurried to the grave, and many months passed before it was discovered that Overbury had been poisoned.

Recent writers on the case agree that Frances Howard was solely responsible for the plot to kill Overbury, but at the time both Robert Carr and Frances' uncle Henry Howard, the Earl of Northampton (son of the sonneteer Surrey and a malicious lay official at Raleigh's trial) were also implicated.<sup>100</sup> As a matter of fact, each of these three people does seem to have had a plot against Overbury, and their various schemes entangled most strangely. Apparently, only Lady Frances desired Overbury's death. Rochester merely wanted Overbury out of the way for a while so that he

could not interfere with the wedding arrangements. Northampton wanted Overbury put in such a position that he could no longer oppose his political ambitions.<sup>101</sup> Northampton's recent scheme to have one of his minions appointed Secretary of State had been blocked by Overbury. Also, Howard greatly desired his niece's alliance with the king's favorite so that he could use Carr to further his own political schemes-- he did not wish Overbury around Rochester to give him the wise advice that would have kept Rochester from being a pawn in his hands.<sup>102</sup>

Howard and Carr met and decided to persuade James to offer Overbury the embassy to Russia.<sup>103</sup> Even though Overbury refused the mission, the plot against him was not destroyed. The refusal was interpreted to James as an act of contempt and disobedience, and the king had Overbury imprisoned in the Tower of London, his jailers being ordered to watch him more closely than was usual with state prisoners.<sup>104</sup> It seemed that Overbury was safely out of the way. Apparently, that was all that Rochester desired--a temporary imprisonment. Lord Howard wanted only a little more--a long imprisonment which would destroy Overbury's hold on Rochester and leave him a helpless tool in Howard's own hands. Lady Frances was completely unsatisfied; she wanted Overbury dead.

She made various attempts to poison Overbury by sending her henchmen to administer toxics to him and by sending poisoned food to the prisoner in Rochester's name. Overbury

sickened, lingered awhile, and then finally died--either directly from the poisons, from a combination of the poisons and disease, or from more violent actions perpetrated by henchmen hired by the impatient Lady Frances to hasten her enemy's demise.<sup>105</sup>

When the facts concerning Overbury's death became known, James directed Edward Coke, then the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, to arrest Somerset, which he promptly did. Coke went to great pains in this case, personally taking part in more than one hundred examinations of witnesses and the accused, writing down their words himself;<sup>106</sup> and Coke was among the justices presiding at Somerset's trial on May 25, 1616. Sir Francis Bacon, the Attorney-General, delivered the principal speech against Somerset for the Crown.<sup>107</sup> Carr was found guilty. Frances Carr was tried separately. She pleaded guilty. But neither of the Carrs was ever executed. In fact, after receiving several reprieves, they were released from confinement in January of 1622, and they were actually given a full pardon by James in 1624.<sup>108</sup>

The exact part, if any, that Carr had in the murder is still unknown. The original murder plan undoubtedly belonged to Frances, but there may have been more than a woman's hatred behind the plot to kill Overbury. Rochester undoubtedly had many past deeds he did not want revealed; and Overbury, long a close personal friend of Carr, might have shared some



Sleep in thy peace: thus happy hast thou prov'd  
Thou mightst have died more known, not more belov'd.

(11. 27-28)

Only one passage is unhappy, in its promise to Overbury:

Rest, happy man; and in thy sphere of awe  
Behold how justice sways the sword of law,  
To weed-out those whose hands embru'd in blood  
Cropt-off thy youth and flower in the bud.

(11. 23-26)

Overbury would not have been able to rest happy had he seen Frances Howard and Robert Carr receive their pardons from King James.

Although Ford does not mention Overbury by name in A Line of Life, there is an unquestionable allusion to his death in the second section, which deals with the character of public men. The opponents of men in public office are of two kinds: flatterers and secret murderers. The latter Ford calls "poisoners of virtue, the betrayers of goodness,"<sup>112</sup> and Ford undoubtedly has Overbury's tragedy in mind as he writes.

The word virtue seems to have been singularly applied to Overbury, although his faults of pride and ambition were well known. In the complete edition of Overbury's works, nine commendatory poems dealing with his death are included. The seven longest of these poems--Ford's and six others (one of which is perhaps the work of John Fletcher)--mention "virtue" in connection with Overbury or his "Wife."<sup>113</sup>

Ford's poem is actually entitled "A Memorial Offered to That Man of Vertue, Sir Tho. Overbury." I have no doubt that the phrase "poisoners of virtue" in A Line of Life is intended to recall Overbury.

Ford's opinions concerning the Overbury affair were those of the age: Overbury was an innocent victim; Somerset and his lady were fiendish murderers. James' reputation suffered, too. His clemency toward convicted murderers gave rise to rumors that the king was involved in this and many other of the dark crimes of his reign--even the incredible charge that James had had a hand in the death of his son and heir, Prince Henry, was revived.<sup>114</sup>

It is probable that the slaughter of Sir Thomas Overbury and the ensuing years of scandal did as much as anything to lessen the general regard of the English people for their Scottish overlord.<sup>115</sup>

Since John Ford was a poet of the court circle in the 1620's and 1630's, many critics have assumed, somewhat too haphazardly, that Ford was in sympathy with the Stuart policies and that he pandered to the wishes of the court. There are many factors which suggest that this was not the case.

Ford was born a gentleman, and he became a scholar--he was thus a member of a proud class and a proud profession. His writings give much evidence of his character, of his sobriety of judgment, of his respect for courage and

aristocratic virtue. It may well be that for Ford the cardinal virtues were "continence, courage, and chivalry."<sup>116</sup> He had these qualities himself, and he admired them in others--Devereux, Raleigh, Percy. These were not the qualities of the Stuarts, or of their favorites Robert Carr and George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, typical examples of the kind of courtier whom Ford constantly attacks.

Ford's character, his expressions of sympathy for men persecuted by James and Cecil, his eulogy for Overbury, his comments on the divine right of kings ("No man can be or should be reputed a god"), and the opposition of his class, his profession, and his own Devonshire to various Stuart policies--all of these suggest that Ford's sympathies lay in opposition to the practices of the kings and their courts. At a time when the rights of individuals were being defended against James and Charles, John Ford, himself an individualist in many ways,<sup>117</sup> could never have been a mere minion of the Stuarts.

#### THE SOCIAL MILIEU

The political and social milieus of Stuart England were often inseparable: one frequently had great repercussions in the other--as in the Overbury affair. Actually James's elevation of Carr to high offices in the state was not so much a political move as a personal one. James greatly admired Carr's handsomeness and his pleasing personality. In an attempt to keep Carr happy he pandered to



the young Scot's every wish and whim and heaped honors and wealth upon his favorite. He moved heaven and earth to pave the way for the Howard marriage and seized Raleigh's estate at Sherborne because "I maun have it. I maun have it for Carr"<sup>118</sup> (an act the dramatist John Webster did not allow to pass unnoticed).<sup>119</sup>

Carr was but the first of many men of pleasant features whom James raised to high position. George Villiers was Carr's successor. Villiers never missed an opportunity to flatter James and cement his own success.

Charles was also fond of Villiers. And after the death of James, Charles was content to leave the guidance of the nation in the hands of his minion until the Duke's assassination in 1628 forced him to become king in more than name.

The Stuart court was as much the center of the social milieu as it had been of the political. Here again the practices of the court were not congenial to the masses of the English people, and it is impossible that a man of Ford's sensitivity could have approved of a society which had such grave limitations as that of the Stuarts.

The tastes of the Jacobean court were extravagant--but not elegant--and manners and morals were not exemplary. James lavished money freely on the masques of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, but at the same time he was enjoying the delicate beauty and artistry of the masque he was amusing himself

with the gross and vulgar antics of the court fools. James swore freely, and his example made the oath fashionable at Whitehall. The king and many of his courtiers had too fond a taste for wine, and after heavy indulgence, their conduct was frequently reprehensible. The ladies of the court did not raise its moral tone. Repartee between the sexes was of a low nature.<sup>120</sup> The dress of the women was at times extremely provocative: Sir Dudley Carlton, later to become Secretary of State, objected that the dresses of the women appearing in Jonson's Masque of Blackness were "too light and courtesan-like" to become the chief ladies of England.<sup>121</sup> The lack of morality in the court was notorious. Sir John Harrington made note of the conduct of the ladies and gentlemen present at the festivities honoring the visit in 1606 of James' brother-in-law, King Christian IV of Denmark:

I came here a day or two before the Danish King came, and from the day he had come to the present hour I have been well-nigh overwhelmed with carousal and sports of all kinds. The sports began each day in such manner and such sort as well-nigh persuaded me of Mahomet's paradise. We had women, and indeed wine, too, of such plenty as would have astonished each beholder...I think the Dane hath strangely wrought on our good English nobles; for those whom I could never get to taste good English liquor now follow the fashion and wallow in beastly delights. The Ladies abandon their sobriety and are seen to roll about in intoxication...there has been no lack of good living, shows, sights, and banqueting from morn to eve.<sup>122</sup>

Carlton's comment and Harrington's letter indicate that both provocation and opportunity for sexual promis-

culty existed at court. Such intrigues as that between Robert Carr and Frances Howard and the affairs of George Villiers testify that opportunity was not always passed by.

Queen Anne's nobility of person somewhat redeemed James's vulgarities of speech and conduct, but the court was still sadly lacking in grace. Outside the court, however, there were coteries where the desire for refinement was sincere. Women were very prominent in these groups. The Countess of Pembroke was the center of such a coterie. Ford's Honor Triumphant was partially dedicated to this lady. Perhaps of even more significance than the Countess of Pembroke in the cultural activity of the age was Lucy Harrington, the Countess of Bedford, to whom John Donne, Ben Jonson, George Chapman, Michael Drayton, and many other poets paid tribute at one time or another. The compliment given her by John Davies in 1612 is representative of her influence; in his Muse's Sacrifice, which he dedicated to her, Davies called the countess the "darling as well as patroness of the Muses."<sup>123</sup>

The tastes and manners of the court improved greatly when Charles and Henrietta Maria became the chief lights of the evenings at Whitehall. But amid the idleness and luxury of the court there was still abundant opportunity for illicit passion, even more than before, in fact, for under Charles and his queen, the courtiers had a new plaything to toy with, the codes of Platonic love, which became the rage of the court in the 1620's and 1630's.

Ford never liked the court or courtiers. He continually attacked the ease and idleness of courts, factors which spawned wantonness. In A Line of Life he writes that "the lethargy and disease of an infectious court-grace" are "but glorious snares...to deceive the constancy of manhood" (395), and this idea is both stated and illustrated in his plays. Ford believed that those who would be noble should act with nobility--that is why he entreated James to be a good man first, a great king second--and that is why Ford must have shared his countrymen's disgust at the king's lavish gifts of power and position to men such as Carr and Villiers. False courtiers were ever Ford's enemies. In Fame's Memorial, he says that the "court should none but nobles entertain" (289)--nobles such as Mountjoy, not Carr and Villiers. He speaks of flatterers as being among the chief enemies of the public man in A Line of Life, and concludes that the flatterer and the false courtier are one and the same. The quality which the courtiers of James and Charles were lacking was honor.

Honor was real to Ford. His fellow-dramatist Thomas Middleton might have been content merely to show the sham behind the word, but Ford tried to give the word its true meaning and make it a guide for human conduct.<sup>124</sup> "Constancy, courage, and chivalry"--these were his ideals, and there is something highly commendable in his regard for these aristocratic virtues.<sup>125</sup>

Ford was always the champion of the golden mean: whenever he mentions moderation, it is with the connotation that it is something admirable.<sup>126</sup> The sensual excesses of the court could not have pleased him; excesses of any kind he disliked. A Line of Life opposes licentiousness, opposes the desires of men "to force a rape on virtue and adulterate the chaste bosom of spotless simplicity" (404). Almost everything Ford ever wrote evinces his dissatisfaction with sexual promiscuity. In his view, to pander to any of the senses was not to be a man. But Ford was no ascetic. The whole point of his masque, The Sun's Darling, is that the pleasures of this world are to be neither abused nor shunned,<sup>127</sup> and the chief theme of Ford's dramas is that the love of man and woman is among the most beautiful and sacred things of earth.

Every one of John Ford's unaided plays is concerned primarily with love and the trials of women--except Perkin Warbeck, and even there they are secondary considerations. It would be well, therefore, to consider the major philosophies of love and the position of the feminine sex in the Jacobean-Caroline milieu from which Ford emerged as an independent dramatist in 1628. The age was making new studies of woman as a sex. Ford's plays are a part of his culture's examination of women, and therefore the contemporary attitudes toward seventeenth century woman are of great significance in the consideration of Ford's achieve-

ment. We shall begin at the throne, with the foreign princess who ruled at James's side.

Whatever the faults in her relationship with James may have been, Anne Stuart was generally a courteous and gracious queen; and she had a large measure of respect from her people. This high regard for the queen did not extend to many other ladies at Whitehall--nor indeed to the sex in general. The scandals involving women at court were a disgrace to the country and drastically lowered the reputation of the sex.<sup>128</sup> The arrogance and pride and self-consciousness of middle-class women accounted also for satire and diatribes on women. And of course Puritan philosophy always relegated woman to an inferior position. Running contrary to these factors were the sheer drive of the sex, the cultural accomplishments of a select group of distinguished women (such as the Countesses of Pembroke and Bedford), the artificial codes of poetic tradition and of the Caroline court. Thus, it is evident that contemporary ideas on woman differed greatly. To some she was a creature worthy of reverence; to others she was merely the sinful daughter of sinful Eve.

In Fynes Moryson's Itinerary of 1617 there appeared an eminently quotable passage: "England in generall is said to be the Hell of Horses, the Purgatory of Servants, and the Paradise of Weomen."<sup>129</sup> This observation is largely true; for even though the social theories and the legal practices

of the nation placed her in a station subordinate to man, the English woman actually enjoyed a remarkable amount of freedom. This independence was not sustained without significant opposition: in 1620 King James instructed the clergy to preach against the detestable vanity and arrogance of the female, and shortly thereafter the court gossip John Chamberlain recorded that "our pulpits ring continually of the insolence and impudence of women..."<sup>130</sup>

Of course, man had never been able, or willing, to overlook the fact that woman, the daughter of Eve, had cost him paradise--but the polemics he had published against her in the Elizabethan and early Jacobean eras had been sporadic; and many of these anti-female tracts were rather good-natured--as was Thomas Dekker's The Batchelar's Banquet (1603), a translation of Les Quinze Joyes de Mariage,<sup>131</sup> which summarizes medieval satire of women. Somewhat less jovial was Barnabe Rich's Faultes, Faultes, and nothing else but Faultes (1606), which included the statement that "they [women] were never halfe so detestable in times past, as they be at this houre..."<sup>132</sup>

During the reign of James the number of pamphlets assailing women ran into the hundreds. The total was increased greatly by scandals at court involving women--especially the shocking murder of Sir Thomas Overbury in 1613 to gratify a woman's lust. Overbury's famous poem The Wife was published posthumously in 1614 as "A Wife Now

the Widdow of Sir Thomas Overburye. Being a most exquisite and singuler Poem of the Choice of a Wife." It was immensely popular; five impressions were made that year, a total of seventeen were produced before the Reformation, and there were many imitations of the work.<sup>133</sup> The whole Overbury affair was a shock and a disgrace to the country, and writers responded with new attacks on Frances Howard's sex. In The Honestie of This Age (1614), Rich deplored the fact that the times were unable "to judge of a Harlot, especially if shee be rich."<sup>134</sup> John Fletcher satirized women in a commendatory poem prefixed to the edition of Overbury's work.<sup>135</sup> Thomas Tuke referred to the Overbury case by name in his formidable publication A Treatise Against Painting and Tincturing of Men and Women: Against Murther and Poisoning: Pride and Ambition: Adulterie and Witchcraft, which was popular enough to have two editions in 1616.<sup>136</sup>

One of the high points in the attack was reached by Joseph Swetman's The Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and unconstant women, which appeared in 1615 and went through ten printings by 1634. Equally as venomous was Hic Mulier (1620), which attacked the "masculine-women" who "are the gilt durt, which imbroders playhouses."<sup>137</sup> Each of these last two diatribes began a pamphlet war. English women were not defenseless, and they answered in kind.

Swetman was attacked by Ester hath hang'd Haman: Or an Answere to a lewd Pamphlet entituled The Arraignment of



Women (1617), which argued that "the principall poynt of Man-hood is to defend, and what more man-like defence than to defend the just reputation of a woman."<sup>138</sup> Hic Mulier was controverted by Haec Vir, "the Areopagitica of the London woman."<sup>139</sup> It is a vigorous defense of women's rights to personal liberty, and an eloquent plea for social progress and the abolition of old foolish customs limiting the activities and behavior of woman.<sup>140</sup>

The poets and dramatists were ever in the midst of the controversy. Ben Jonson satirized the London woman from the beginning to the end of his stage career. Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher also satirized her occasionally-- as in The Knight of the Burning Pestle. And Thomas Middleton was continually condemning the lust and vanity and folly of the ladies of the middle-class. Thomas Heywood showed the weakness of the sex in A Woman Killed with Kindness, but he also wrote many passages in defense of women.<sup>141</sup> Heywood took an active part in the pamphlet wars, publishing Gunaikeion: or, Nine Books of Various History Concerning Women in 1624 and following this defense of noble and virtuous women in 1640 with The Exemplary Lives and memorable Acts of nine the most worthy Women of the World.<sup>142</sup>

Thomas Dekker's satire The Batchelar's Banquet was in at least its fourth edition by 1631, and Dekker satirized women in several other pamphlets, notably Newes from Hell. A long poem on the tortures of Hell, Dekker his Dreame,

describes the horrid torments of "Gay gawdy women," those females "Whose backs wore out more Fashions than their Wit." In a marginal gloss the purpose of the poem is stated: "Pride of womē (and in that the effeminacy of men in this age) is heere taxed and rewarded."<sup>143</sup>

But Dekker's satire is generally not malicious. He frequently sympathizes with woman's problems, as he does in The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London, where he discusses the cruelty of enforced marriage. Dekker rails against the cruelty of compelling "children (for wealth) to goe into loathed beds."<sup>144</sup> If a man were rich, then no matter how advanced his age, Dekker knew that there would be some parents willing to offer him "the tender boosome of a Virgin, upon whose fore-head was never written sixteene yeares."<sup>145</sup> Then the child would be helplessly caught and her life ruined, for

if she refuse this living death (for lesse than a death it cannot be unto her) She is threatned to bee left an out-cast, cursd for disobedience, railed at daily, and revylde howerlye: to save her selfe from which basenes, she desprately runnes into a bondage, and goes to Church to be married, as if she went to be buried. But what glorye atcheive you in these conquests? you doe wrong to Time, in forcing May to embrace December: you dishonour Age, in bringing it into scorn for insufficiency, into a loathing for dotage, into all mens laughter for jealousye. You make your Daughters looke wrinckled with sorrowes, before they be olde, & your sonnes by riot, to be beggars in midst of their youth. Hence come it, y<sup>t</sup> murders are often contrived, & as often acted: our countrie is woful in fresh examples...<sup>146</sup>

Dekker was not overstating his case, for we shall note several examples of forced marriage later and an old ballad

from the Elizabethan era, still extant, vividly records the tale of just such a case as Dekker mentioned. At Tavistock a young woman named Glandfield was compelled to marry a rich old man named Page. The young wife and her lover, a steward named Strawbridge, strangled Page while he was sleeping, and were caught and executed for their crime. After recounting this tragic story, the ballad concludes with this pithy sentiment:

Lord, give all parents wisdom to foresee  
The match is marred where minds do not agree.<sup>147</sup>

From the sentiments of Dekker and the ballad-singer to the theme of The Broken Heart is not a distant journey. Nor is the sentiment found only there in Ford's work. The right of a woman to choose her own mate appears again and again in the writings of the dramatist.

As far as the pamphlet warfare is concerned Ford's sympathies are with woman. Honor Triumphant, written in 1606, may even be considered a document in the literary battle. This interpretation probably takes the tract more seriously than its writer intended; but even so, the work contains an explicit statement of Ford's disapproval of the "frantic wilfulness" of those men "who, in the rancorous spleens of an unprevailing rancour, durst not only in the malice of their tongues to speak, but in the venom of their hearts to copy out whole pamphlets against the dignity of the female sex" (345).

In addition to this battle of the books, the seventeenth century also saw the clash of two powerful traditions involving women and love. There is evidence that Ford was quite familiar with both of these, the Puritan and the Platonic.

The position of women in society was greatly affected by the rise of Puritanism. The men of the Puritan sects always looked upon woman with suspicion--she had, after all, cost them Eden. Accordingly, their ideology insisted that woman was subordinate to man, that the wife was subordinate to her husband. A century of Puritan writings on the subject, culminating perhaps in the divorce tracts of Milton, indicates that Puritanism imposed great limitations on the female sex.

Yet, to say that the status of woman was inferior was not to deny her certain things. She did, for instance, have as great a right to grace as any man. And as wife and mother her responsibilities were great ones.

The Puritans always exalted the marital state and family life. The home, with all the happiness the word connotes, was one of God's great gifts to earthly man; and therein woman was necessary. Marriage, in Puritan beliefs, was a union of two souls: a wife was not a slave to her husband but a gracious companion to his soul.<sup>148</sup>

Familial happiness could best be achieved if the mutual responsibilities of man and wife were realized and

shared. William Gouge insisted upon this: at the same time that he pointed out that man was superior to woman he pointed out also that a good husband would not require more obedience than a good wife would willingly give. John Dod wrote that the husband must trust his wife so that the home and family could benefit from her talents. Dod summarized his points thus: "If the Pilot would both holde the sterne, and hoyse up the sayle, & be upon the hatches, and labour at the pompe, and do all himselfe, it must needs go ill with the ship."<sup>149</sup>

Thus, the role of woman was of great importance within certain bounds, and the Puritans recognized fully the joys of allowing woman the full use of her talents within these bounds--as is shown in the initial happiness of Milton's Adam and Eve, Puritans for all their fig leaves. But there can be no doubt that in broader areas the role of woman was highly limited in Puritan society.

One passage from Ford's religious poem, Christ's Bloody Sweat, sounds much like the Puritan viewpoint:

But such whose lawfull thoughts, and honest heat,  
Doth temperately move with chast desires,  
To choose a partner, and beget  
Like comforts by a like inkindled fires:  
Such find no doubt in union made so even  
Sweet fruits of succors, and on earth a heaven.

Ford frequently emphasizes the beauty of successful marriage, a fact which has been generally overlooked.<sup>150</sup> In the dedication to The Lady's Trial he praises the long and successful marriage of John and Mary Wyrley, a "most equal pair" (3),

whose "happiness in the fruition of each other's love proceeds to a constancy..." (4). In Perkin Warbeck he calls a happy marriage "heaven on earth."<sup>151</sup> My notice of these facts is not an attempt to label Ford a Puritan. I merely wish to show certain similarities between the dramatist and the extreme Protestant sects.

A broad movement which ran contrary to the tendency of Puritanism and the popular literature against woman flourished in the age, particularly among the nobility. From romantic medieval conceptions of woman, as transmuted by Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, and other poets, there had come a new philosophy which insisted that women and love were things ideal. Woman was not only elevated, she was worshipped.

This important movement involving the seventeenth century woman was reinforced in 1625, when Princess Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry of Navarre, the King of France, arrived in England to become the bride of Charles I. The new queen brought with her the codes of Platonic love, with which she soon indoctrinated the Stuart court. One of the chief facets of modern criticism of Ford concerns his attitudes toward the Platonic codes. We must take a long look at this aspect of the contemporary scene.

Henrietta Maria's fashions of love and beauty had originally been inspired by ideas in Honore D'Urfe's novel Astrée, ideas which had afterwards been formulated into a

code in the Hotel de Rambouillet of Catherine de Vivonne. D'Urfe's book was the inspiration for the cults of Platonic love which rapidly became fashionable in the early seventeenth century:

Il est évident qu'a l'hotel de Rambouillet et dans les salons organisés sur ce modèle, on tient à honneur d'appliquer les théories de l'Astrée sur le respect des femmes, la souveraineté de la grâce et de la beauté, la bonne tenue, les manières élégantes, la parfaite éducation, cet ensemble de qualités aimables et distinguées qui faisaient au dix-septième siècle "l'honnête homme" avec l'honnêteté en moins.<sup>152</sup>

The principles of Platonic love were not unknown in England when Henrietta Maria arrived--Ford dealt with the codes in Honor Triumphant in 1606, preceding D'Urfe's work by several years--but they had never enjoyed the popularity they were shortly to gain. It was the court, that part of the English people nearest the princess, who responded most eagerly to her concepts of idealized love. Such Platonic tenets as the following became the law at Whitehall:

Fate rules all lovers.  
Beauty and goodness are one and the same.  
Beautiful women are saints to be worshipped.  
True love is of equal hearts and divine.  
Love is all-important and all powerful.  
True love is more important than marriage.  
True love is the sole guide to virtue.  
True love allows any liberty of action and  
thought.<sup>153</sup>

As late as 1634, the Platonic codes were still the talk of the English nobility. A letter of James Howell, dated June 3, 1634, defined "Platonick Love" and noted its continuing popularity among the Cavalier ladies and

gentlemen:

The court affords little news at present, but that there is a Love call'd Platonick Love, which much sways there of late: it is a Love abstracted from all corporeal gross Impressions and sensual Appetite, but consists in Contemplations and ideas of the Mind, not in any carnal Fruition. This Love sets the Wits of the Town on work; and \_\_\_\_\_ say there will be a Mask shortly of it, whereof Her Majesty and her maids of Honour will be part.<sup>154</sup>

The masque alluded to in Howell's letter was probably The Temple of Love of Sir William D'Avenant. This play explained that the queen and her maids had brought new ideas of love to a dull isle in the north called Britain and added that these ideas had been fully accepted at the court.<sup>155</sup>

This masque was representative of the appeal the new French import had for the court playwrights. Throughout the reign of Charles and Henrietta Maria the drama reflected the interest the court had in the new love philosophy.

Brief references and allusions to Platonic love began to appear shortly after Henrietta Maria's arrival. By 1629 the cult had become so well known that Ben Jonson could create a typical Platonic lady in the person of Lady Frances Frampul. The dramatic importance of the codes increased to the point that in 1633 an entire play had no other purpose than to illustrate the guiding principles of Platonic lovers: The Shepherd's Paradise of Walter Montague explained the more abstruse and esoteric points of Platonic doctrine by giving dramatic form to the main rules of the cult.<sup>156</sup>



As Howell's letter made evident, physical intercourse was not the aim of the Platonic coterie. But it certainly must have seemed a possibility to the uninitiated, for a great amount of physical dalliance could be involved in the activities of the cultists and such a code as "True love allows any liberty of action and thought" provided the law to support dalliance.

This misunderstanding, or mistrust, of the Platonic principles is evident in William Cartwright's The Royall Slave (1636). In the play a group of several men are prevented from carrying away a few maids by force. The men explain their action as:

A little love-sport only; we were arguing  
Pro and con out of Plato, and are now  
Going to practise his Philosophy.

To this one of the threatened ladies answers:

What they stile Love-sport only, and misname  
An arguing out of Plato, would have prov'd  
A true and down-ripe rape, if that your presence  
Had not become our Rescue.<sup>157</sup>

But Cartwright's implications were not baseless ones, for the ideals of the dramatists serving the cult soon began to take strange turnings. Since fate ruled lovers, the question of sin became of no importance. Since love was a higher bond than marriage, marital ties were of no significance to lovers. In The Platonic Lovers of D'Avenant, Fredeline wished his mistress were married so that he could find added zest by adding adultery to love.<sup>158</sup> In Sir

John Suckling's Aglaure incest was defended in the name of love; Orbella says:

...but my husband's brother:  
and what of that? doe harmless birds or beasts  
aske leave of curious Heraldrie at all?  
Does not the wombe of one faire spring,  
bring unto the earth many sweet rivers,  
that wantonly doe one another chace,  
and in one bed, kisse, mingle and embrace?<sup>159</sup>

Since Orbella was beautiful and therefore divine, her love was pure; there could be no taint of sin in her thoughts, even those of incest. This was the extreme of cultist reasoning. Lovers made their own laws--and there could be no other laws for them.<sup>160</sup>

As we have already noted, Puritan teaching placed the female in a secondary position. Thus, it was impossible that Puritanism could accept the idealization of beauty in woman which was explicit in the Platonic codes or such an extreme of moral individualism as that seen in the court drama. And yet there seems to have been little open warfare between Puritanism and Platonism. With Milton, for example, there was no great problem in reconciling the two<sup>161</sup>--but from lesser Puritans we would expect fierce denunciations of the Platonic codes, and there is no record that these denunciations were ever put forward.

Even though there is little evidence to indicate that the Puritan divines lashed out at the Platonic coterie at court, they could hardly have approved of it. And there are a few vague allusions which could be taken as reactions to

the Platonic love cult in the writings of two of the angriest of the Puritans, William Prynne and Henry Burton. Burton, for example, attacked courtiers who had been trained in such a "licentiated disorderly campe, as that of Venus" and who participated in "effeminate sports."<sup>162</sup>

Robert Crofts cannot be definitely associated with the Puritans, but it seems likely that he was of their membership. At any rate he did lash out strongly against what he thought to be the lustful dalliance of courtiers:

You Courtiers and others, who thinke it a trimme piece of glory to get a Mistresse, and a Ladyes favour forsooth, you who esteeme and call your Minnions, Goddesses, and divine creatures; And would like Adam give Paradise if you had it for an Apple, and venture heaven to satisfie your base and unlawful Lusts, you that adore these Victimes, and think your selves most happy when you can tempt the Pudicity of these female creatures and overcome them to your Lusts, what doe you but act the Devil's Stratagems which he teaches you, what doe you enjoy and adore but a Crust of Playster full of corruption, a peece of flesh that must Rot and turn to Putrifaction.<sup>163</sup>

Crofts was aware that the idealistic codes of Platonic love could be a shield for illicit passion. Such passion could never be approved in Puritan thinking. The sect recognized love as a powerful force, but it was to be consummated only in marriage.

The Puritans were also somewhat suspicious of feminine beauty. Beauty was not necessarily bad, but no woman should be chosen for marriage for beauty alone. A woman who was both beautiful and godly was an acceptable mate for man.<sup>164</sup>

It is evident that Puritanism and the court Platonism were irreconcilable on some matters. The former embraced love and marriage as its holy rule and denigrated feminine beauty.<sup>165</sup> The latter accepted beauty as a sign of purity and made love a higher law than marriage (In the divorce tracts Milton also made love a greater bond than mere marital tie, but the direction of Milton's emphasis was, of course, far different from that of the Platonists).

However, the Puritans were actually in agreement with the Platonists on some points. They agreed that "Fate rules all lovers." The Puritans admitted that the force of love was irresistible--because love between one man and one woman stemmed from a pre-established plan of God. One Puritan divine, Thomas Gataker, explained the situation thus: "As Faith, so Love cannot be constrained.... There are secret lincks of affection, that no reason can be rendered of...."<sup>166</sup> Daniel Rogers was perhaps the most emphatic of all Puritan preachers in this insistence that lovers were ordained for each other by providence. Love was a union of souls, and it was the purpose of the universe to bring the souls of one certain man and one certain woman together.<sup>167</sup>

Therefore a problem is set for us as we read certain of Ford's works. When Ford illustrates the theme that "Fate rules all lovers," he may not be, as has been previously assumed, a defender of Platonic orthodoxy. He may be illustrating such orthodoxy, or he may be testifying to his know-

ledge of Puritan beliefs (or, to introduce another situation, he may be merely showing that he is a part of "the star-crossed Renaissance").

The whole question of Ford's decadence must be examined in toto later, but it would be advantageous to consider certain aspects of his attitude toward the Platonic codes at this time. Many critics purport to find in Ford's plays such extremes of Platonic sophistry as that of Orbella in Suckling's Aglaura. These critics assume that Ford was a lawless sensualist, that he really believed that love could justify any extremity of action or thought, and that he was writing in support of adulterous lovers in Love's Sacrifice and in support of incestuous lovers in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore. Before attempting to see whether these critical assertions are accurate, it would be purposeful to look and see what a few others of Ford's contemporaries thought of Platonic love. We have already seen the Puritan viewpoint; the opinions of the poets and playwrights remain to be considered.

It is to be doubted that many of the English court dramatists ever became true followers of Henrietta Maria's pleasant pastime. Walter Montague was the queen's favorite; he served her long and well; and, in fact, he became a Catholic in 1635--but in Sessions of the Poets (1637) Sir John Suckling clearly implies that the English did not really understand the Platonic codes very deeply; and he includes Montague, who had written a play of 6300 lines on

the subject of Platonic love, among those who knew little of it:

Wat Montague now stood forth to his tryal,  
And did not so much as suspect a denial;  
But witty Apollo asked him first of all,  
If he understood his own pastoral,  
For if he could do it, 'twould plainly appear  
He understood more than any man there,  
And did merit the bayes above all the rest;  
But the monsieur was modest and silence confest.<sup>168</sup>

Ben Jonson was certainly no devotee of the cult. He could not take the cult seriously, and he was highly amused by the artificiality of Platonic enthusiasts. By 1629 the cult had become so well known that Jonson thought it worth satirizing in The New Inn. Lady Frances Frampul is Jonson's example of a Platonic devotee; in the character summaries which precede the play itself, Jonson says that Lady Frances "thinks nothing a felicity, but to have a multitude of servants, and be call'd Mistresse by them..."<sup>169</sup> Lovel, the melancholy hero of the play, describes her in similar terms in the first act:

...she thinks naught a happiness, but to have  
a multitude of servants; and to get them,  
Though she be very honest, yet she ventures  
Upon these precipices, that would make her  
Not seem so, to some prying narrow natures.

(I. 1.)

By "servants" Jonson and Lovel mean cavalieri servente--servants-in-love.

When Lovel meets Lady Frances, he speaks to her of love--love in the new Platonic fashion:

Love is a spiritual coupling of two souls,  
 So much more excellent, as it least relates  
 Unto the body...

(III. ii.)

The end of love is to have two made one  
 In will, and in affection, that the minds  
 Be first inoculated, not the bodies.

(III. ii.)

After more Platonic theorizing such as this, the lady is thoroughly charmed and pays his knowledge an ecstatic compliment:

O speak, and speak forever! let mine ear  
 Be feasted still, and filled with this banquet!  
 No sense can ever surfeit on such truth,  
 It is the marrow of all lovers' tenets!  
 Who had read Plato, Heliodore, or Tattius,  
 Sidney, D'Urfe, or all Love's fathers, like him?  
 He's there the Master of the Sentences,  
 Their school, their commentary, text, and gloss,  
 And breathes the true divinity of love!

(III. ii.)

Jonson's play is indicative of the attitude that many of the Caroline poets and playwrights had toward Platonic love--they thought the artificiality of the court slightly ridiculous. Thomas Carew--like Suckling, a Cavalier poet--wrote in reaction to the cult. John Cleveland has a great amount of cynicism and irony beneath his outward conformity to the code in "To Chloris, A Rapture."<sup>170</sup>

A few other poets also seemed to take the Platonic codes seriously at times, but it is doubtful that they really believed in them. Edward Waller appeared to have sympathy for Platonic love in his poems to Sacharissa, but

in "Of Love" he compared the English court to an eastern harem, where eunuch-like courtiers "All to one idol bend."<sup>171</sup>

Charles Cotton wrote platonically of an embrace:

Such a kiss to be I find  
The conversation of the mind  
And whisper of the soul;

Then he reversed his position and attacked the "monstrous regiment of women":

By Heav'n 'tis against all nature,  
Honour and manhood, wit and sense  
To let a little female creature  
Rule on the pure account of feature,  
And thy unmanly patience  
Monstrous and shameful as her insolence.<sup>172</sup>

Cotton thought unreasonable the demands which the tenets of Platonic love made on man in the relationship of the sexes. The playwright Richard Brome, whom Ford seems to have known, was also ready to put love aside for reason:

Reason, henceforth, not Love, shall be my guide,  
My fellow-creatures shan't be deified;  
I'll now a rebel be,  
And so pull down  
That distaff monarchy,  
And females' fancied crown...<sup>173</sup>

Thomas Randolph's "A Platonic Elegy" included the following passage:

Thus they, whose reasons love, and not their  
sense,  
The spirits love;<sup>174</sup>

And a Puritan named Milton also wrote of love and reason as being things which existed together. In Paradise Lost he wrote of how man should love woman:



What higher in her society thou find'st  
 Attractive, human, rational, love still:  
 In loving thou dost well, in passion not,  
 Wherein true love consists not. Love refines  
 The thoughts, and heart enlarges--hath his seat  
 In reason, and is judicious, is the scale  
 By which to Heavenly Love, thou may'st ascend,  
 Not sink in carnal pleasure.

(VIII. 586-594)

John Ford preceded both the Hotel de Rambouillet and D'Urfe's Astrée in espousing the dogmas of Platonic love. Honor Triumphant (1606) was a lengthy defense of four Platonic codes, and Ford's involvement with Platonic ideals continued until the end of his dramatic career--among his plays, the tragedies 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Love's Sacrifice may be best understood if the new Platonism is kept in mind.

Therefore, the fact that Ford was involved with the codes of Platonic love is impossible and unnecessary to deny. The question of importance concerns Ford's attitudes toward those codes. The various critics who would have us believe that Ford was an unbridled individualist in matters of love, that he made love his highest deity can hardly be said to have a case. Like Waller and Cotton, Ford could make poetic capital of cult doctrine without really believing in it himself. In 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, Giovanni uses Platonic tenets to plead his love, but Giovanni's beliefs lead him straight to death. Like Jonson, Ford frequently satirized the jargon of the Platonic coterie--he did so, for instance,

in The Lover's Melancholy and in The Fancies Chaste and Noble.<sup>175</sup> And like Milton, Ford believed man had to love with reason, or within reason, should we say. Giovanni applies casuistry to justify his incestuous passion, but the Friar is always there to say he reasons ill. A Line of Life, a central document in the study of Ford, shows him to share the ideas of Milton and the Puritans. With Milton he can say that man must "moderate affections" in order to preserve "the laws of reason" (393). With the Puritans he recognizes that "the temptation of a reputed beauty" could destroy an "erected heart" (395). The words of Milton and other Puritan thinkers echo in this passage from A Line of Life: "Is such a mighty man enticed to overrule his reason, nay overbear it, by giving scope to his licentious eye, first to see, then to delight in, lastly to covet, a chaste beauty?" (403-404).

Granting that Ford might have been in complete earnest in Honor Triumphant (and that assumption is debatable), it seems inconceivable that a man such as Ford could have passed through thirty more years of the variegated milieu of the Stuarts without adopting more substantial ideas concerning life and love. And, as we have seen, his later works do show an awareness of love that goes far beyond the Platonic absolutes. His plays certainly indicate that he was no follower of Henrietta Maria's French fashions. He was not writing of a plaything for courtiers--Ford was writing of hearts which feel pain.

There were real women in the age who felt pain. Ford must have been aware of several of the major incidents of his time which involved love and marriage. These individual situations are of importance in the study of the milieu because they provide intimate evidence of the character of the age. Chronologically the *Astrophel and Stella* affair is the earliest that is definitely relative to Ford's career.

Philip Sidney and Penelope Devereux had known each other during their youth, and it had been assumed by some that Philip was a suitor for her hand. Her father, the Earl of Essex, evidently desired the match.<sup>176</sup> But after the earl's death, Penelope's guardians forced her to marry Lord Rich, a man who was by nature "mean, jealous, and brutal."<sup>177</sup> Later, it was protested that Penelope, "being in the power of her friends, was married against her will, unto one against whom she did protest at the very solemnity and ever after..."<sup>178</sup> Penelope Devereux remained the wife of Lord Rich for over twenty years. During that period she was idealized as Stella in Sidney's sonnet sequence, *Astrophel and Stella*, and she became the mistress of Charles Blount, the Earl of Devonshire, bearing him five children while serving in that position. Despite her affair with Blount, Lady Rich still enjoyed a reputation as one of the chief ladies of England.<sup>179</sup>

Lord and Lady Rich were divorced in November, 1605; and Blount, the national hero of the moment, married her the following December. Court society, which had accepted Blount

and Penelope as man and mistress, rejected them as man and wife. King James informed Blount "that he had purchased a fair woman with a black soul."<sup>180</sup> The scandal which followed the marriage disgraced Blount, and he died shortly thereafter. His unhappy lady followed him to the grave in a matter of months. The chaplain who performed the ceremony, William Laud, also received heavy censure.<sup>181</sup>

Ideas concerning divorce and remarriage were, of course, very strict in the Renaissance. With the Catholics, divorce was illegal (though annulments could sometimes be made); remarriage was, therefore, out of the question. With the Protestants divorce was technically possible (though seldom granted), but the validity of remarriage was rather dubious. Some Calvinists argued that second marriages were legal. Others maintained that remarriage was permissible only for the wronged party in the original marriage. Some other Protestants were even more conservative than this, arguing that a man could remarry if his wife had been unfaithful, but denying a woman the same privilege.<sup>182</sup>

The Calvinists then had the most liberal ideas on divorce; and Lord Rich was a Calvinist, in fact, the leader of the Puritan sect in Essex.<sup>183</sup> Rich wanted the divorce, and it was allowed by the Anglican Church.

It was the remarriage, not the divorce, which enraged public opinion. Penelope Devereux had left one brood of children with Lord Rich and taken five others to Blount. The

idea of such a woman contemplating remarriage was too much for James and his court to sustain.

The whole affair had great significance in Ford's career. Fame's Memorial was, of course, a tribute to Blount, and it was dedicated to his widow. But the importance of the affair to Ford may not have ended with that one work. The Broken Heart has been called an allegory of the *Astrophel* and *Stella* episodes. This popular theory, first presented by Stuart Sherman,<sup>184</sup> suggests that Orgilus, Penthea and Bassanes represent Sidney, Penelope, and Rich respectively. The theory is attractive and quite possibly correct.

Penelope's was not the only tragedy in the age to result from an enforced marriage. Sir Edward Coke, anxious to regain favor with King James after being dismissed as Chief Justice of the King's Bench, offered his daughter as the wife of Sir John Villiers, the idiot brother of the Duke of Buckingham, then the king's favorite. Coke's daughter, Lady Frances, was only fourteen at the time; Villiers was about forty.

The young girl was naturally horrified. She and her equally horrified mother stole away by night and barricaded themselves in the home of a relative, hoping that their trail would not be found.

However, the furious Coke located them and led an armed party including his sons to the site. They forced open the gate leading to the house and broke down several doors by

force before finding the objects of their search. Coke tore the child from his wife and rode away with her. Shortly thereafter, the weeping bride was led into holy wedlock.<sup>185</sup>

The marriage was not successful. To escape from her difficulties, Frances eloped with Sir Robert Howard. After traveling abroad for a while she died young.<sup>186</sup>

In 1631 another scandal entertained London. Sir Giles Allington was convicted of living in incest with Dorothy Dalton. An entry in The Calendar of State Papers Domestic for May 12, 1631, records the "sentence of the ecclesiastical commissioners upon Sir Giles Allington for intermarrying with Dorothy Dalton, daughter of Michael Dalton and his wife, which latter was half-sister to Sir Giles."<sup>187</sup>

The affair created considerable sensation, and the penalties meted out to the guilty parties were severe. Shortly after the trial the Reverend Joseph Mead wrote of the impressiveness of the court scene. Eight bishops had presided, and they had handed down heavy sentences, including a £2000 fine upon the party who had obtained the license for the wedding. Mead concluded by observing that "it was the solemnest, the gravest and the severest censure that ever, they say, was made in that court."<sup>188</sup>

These are individual incidents, widely scattered in time; but they are important because they prove that Ford's themes and his portraits of suffering lovers are not as divorced from reality as many observers have thought them to be. Admit-

tedly, incest is hardly a common social problem, but it can and does occur--and Ford, thinking the problem worthy of serious tragic consideration, dealt with it significantly in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore. The cruelty of enforced marriage, brilliantly and poignantly portrayed in The Broken Heart, could have been the result of Ford's interest in actual incidents. Either Penelope Devereux or Frances Coke could have been the living model for Penthea of The Broken Heart.

In our attempt to relate Ford to his social milieu we have found sufficient evidence to indicate that in all probability Ford was not a great admirer of the Stuart court. Ford was an idealist in many ways. Doubtless a few of the idealistic codes of the Platonic love coterie had some appeal to him, but he could never have accepted the law that true love justifies any liberty of action or thought. Nor would he have accepted love as a higher bond than marriage--love to Ford was the chiefest of all felicities that went to compose earthly happiness;<sup>189</sup> but Ford, like Spenser, desired the fruition of love in marriage. Ford was no moral anarchist.

Although he rejected the frivolousness of the court, he did not go to the other extreme and support the rigid domestic policies of the Puritans.<sup>190</sup> Those policies were too narrow for Ford's acceptance; they limited woman too much.

As far as the popular literary war against women is concerned, Ford must have been on the side of the women. He would have felt that the seventeenth century English woman was more sinned against than sinning. He was by all accounts the chief defender of woman in the Stuart drama.

Whether Ford gained his knowledge of women from personal experience or from books or, as seems most likely, from the two combined, the fact remains that he knew them well. He did understand the burden that women of his society--such women as Penelope Rich and Frances Coke--had to bear. His tragic heroines, Penthea, Annabella, Bianca--also Spinella and Castamela in the lesser comedies--suffer because they are not allowed to lead their lives as they desire. It is this conflict that Ford repeatedly makes his theme--"the conflict between the world's opinion and the heart's desire."<sup>191</sup>

Ford's vision was opposed to much of his milieu. From the very beginnings of his literary career, he was writing not for but against the wrongs of the age. Fame's Memorial defended a man and woman whom all the world had scorned. And the works which followed--The Golden Mean, A Line of Life, The Witch of Edmonton, The Broken Heart, Perkin Warbeck--all of these placed the stamp of Ford's disapproval on some aspect--political or social--of his time. Politically, he opposed the abuse of power. Socially, he opposed the abuse of the sanctity of love and the abuse of woman. He knew that



love could make a "heaven on earth." He knew also that women such as Lady Rich and Lady Coke had suffered greatly in return for having been born members of a legally inferior sex. Therefore, he treated women with tenderness and sympathy, writing "as one who had searched intimately and felt with instinctive sympathy the fibres of their hearts."<sup>192</sup> The milieus of Fame's Memorial and The Broken Heart are the milieus of Haec Vir and The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, and Ford stands together with Milton and an anonymous woman writer as seventeenth century defenders of domestic freedom and personal liberties.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>John Neville Figgis, quoted in Holdsworth, p. 119.

<sup>5</sup>The Political Works of James I, ed. Charles Howard McIlwain, Harvard Political Classics, I (Cambridge, 1918), p. 63.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. XXXV, 12.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. XXXV, 272.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>9</sup>George Macaulay Trevelyan, England Under the Stuarts (New York, 1946), p. 86.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>McIlwain, pp. 307-308. Cf. Struble, pp. 32-33.

<sup>14</sup>McIlwain, p. XXXV.

<sup>15</sup>John Heneage Jesse, Memoirs of the Court of England (Boston, n.d.), 1, 65-66.

<sup>16</sup>John Ford Campbell, The Lives of the Chief Justices of England (New York, 1874), p. 274.

<sup>17</sup>Holdsworth, pp. 115-116.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 113; Catherine Drinker Bowen, The Lion and the Throne: The Life and Times of Sir Edward Coke (Boston, 1957), p. 310.

- <sup>20</sup>Holdswood, p. 116.
- <sup>21</sup>Campbell, pp. 248, 250, 252.
- <sup>22</sup>Trevelyan, p. 100.
- <sup>23</sup>Campbell, pp. 214-215.
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- <sup>25</sup>Trevelyan, pp. 99-100.
- <sup>26</sup>Charles Williams, James I. (New York, n.d.), p. 194.
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- <sup>28</sup>Campbell, p. 285.
- <sup>29</sup>Davies, p. 17.
- <sup>30</sup>Davies, p. 18.
- <sup>31</sup>Trevelyan, p. 99.
- <sup>32</sup>Gerald Brenan, A History of the House of Percy, ed. W. A. Lindsay (London, 1902), II, 103-104; Hugh Ross Williamson, The Gunpowder Plot (New York, 1952), p. 59. Cf. Davies, p. 7.
- <sup>33</sup>Davies, p. 7. Cf. Trevelyan, pp. 80-81.
- <sup>34</sup>Clifford Leech, John Ford and the Drama of his Time (London, 1957), p. 23.
- <sup>35</sup>The Works of John Ford, ed. William Gifford, with additions by Reverend Alexander Dyce (London, 1895), iii. The internal reference is to the page number of the volume. This edition is hereafter cited as Gifford-Dyce.
- <sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 394.
- <sup>37</sup>Brenan, pp. 128-129. It was Northumberland who called this fine the largest ever borne by an English subject. Brenan concurs.
- <sup>38</sup>Gifford-Dyce, p. 401.
- <sup>39</sup>Davies, p. 32.

- <sup>40</sup>Trevelyan, pp. 129, 132.
- <sup>41</sup>Charles Petrie, The Stuarts (London, 1937), p. 111.
- <sup>42</sup>Trevelyan, pp. 136-137, 139.
- <sup>43</sup>Petrie, p. 117.
- <sup>44</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup>Davies, pp. 40-41.
- <sup>46</sup>Struble, p. 33; Davies, p. 39.
- <sup>47</sup>Holdsworth, p. 118.
- <sup>48</sup>See Gifford-Dyce, 11,4.
- <sup>49</sup>A. W. Ward in Mary Edith Cochnower, "John Ford," in Seventeenth Century Studies, Series 1, ed. Robert Shafer (Princeton, 1933), p. 179.
- <sup>50</sup>Cochnower, p. 180.
- <sup>51</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>52</sup>Davies, pp. 408-409.
- <sup>53</sup>Petrie, p. 53.
- <sup>54</sup>Davies, p. 32.
- <sup>55</sup>Campbell, p. 259.
- <sup>56</sup>Ibid., Cf. Bowen, p. 148.
- <sup>57</sup>Campbell, p. 225; Walter Bouchier Devereux, Lives and Letters of the Devereux, Earls of Essex (London, 1853), 11, 159.
- <sup>58</sup>Devereux, pp. 161, 186-190. Cf. Willard M. Wallace, Sir Walter Raleigh (Princeton, 1959), pp. 169-170.
- <sup>59</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 6.
- <sup>60</sup>Unless otherwise noted all citations from the non-dramatic works of John Ford are from Gifford-Dyce, 111.
- <sup>61</sup>The treasurer addressed here is evidently Thomas Sackville, the Earl of Dorset. See Davies, p. 437.

<sup>62</sup>Cf. Ford's references to Essex in A Line of Life (405-406).

<sup>63</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 6.

<sup>64</sup>Campbell, p. 230.

<sup>65</sup>Devereux, pp. 175-177; Wallace, pp. 163-164, 170.

<sup>66</sup>Campbell, p. 228.

<sup>67</sup>Wallace, p. 205; Hugh De Selincourt, Great Raleigh (London, 1908), p. 210.

<sup>68</sup>Campbell, p. 264.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 229.

<sup>71</sup>Wallace, p. 203.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 202. See Bowen, p. 140.

<sup>74</sup>Wallace, p. 312; Campbell, p. 230.

<sup>75</sup>Gifford-Dyce, iii, 398.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 399.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Campbell, p. 230.

<sup>80</sup>Wallace, p. 217.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., pp. 312-316.

<sup>82</sup>Brenan, pp. 50, 207. Percy married Dorothy Devereux, Robert's second sister. Percy disliked Essex, whom he called "a mere royal minion;" and before adversity placed them in the same prison, he had had little regard for Raleigh--see Brenan, p. 63.

<sup>83</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 11; Williamson, pp. 59, 77.

<sup>84</sup>Williamson, pp. 15, 165-166.

- <sup>85</sup>Ibid., p. 250, Brennan, p. 124.
- <sup>86</sup>Brennan, pp. 127-128.
- <sup>87</sup>Ibid., pp. 128, 199.
- <sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 147.
- <sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 150.
- <sup>90</sup>See Brennan, pp. 147-150; Wallace, pp. 181-192; and Devereux, p. 149.
- <sup>91</sup>Brennan, pp. 164-165.
- <sup>92</sup>Ibid., pp. 164-166.
- <sup>93</sup>The Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse of Sir Thomas Overbury, Knt., ed. Edward F. Rimbault (London, 1890), p. 280. Overbury entered the Middle Temple in 1598; the length of his stay is not known.
- <sup>94</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 12.
- <sup>95</sup>Jesse, p. 258.
- <sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 260; Rimbault, p. xxix.
- <sup>97</sup>Jesse, p. 260. Cf. Miriam Allen de Ford, The Overbury Affair (Philadelphia, 1960), p. 9.
- <sup>98</sup>Rimbault, p. x; de Ford, p. 29.
- <sup>99</sup>Rimbault, p. x; de Ford, p. 30.
- <sup>100</sup>Wallace, p. 203; William McElwee, The Murder of Sir Thomas Overbury (New York, 1952), p. 33.
- <sup>101</sup>McElwee, p. 75.
- <sup>102</sup>Ibid., pp. 63-64, 75.
- <sup>103</sup>Jesse, pp. 266-267; McElwee, pp. 70-71. See Rimbault, p. xlv.
- <sup>104</sup>McElwee, pp. 73-74; Jesse, p. 267; de Ford, p. 35.
- <sup>105</sup>Jesse, pp. 269-270; McElwee, pp. 83, 91; de Ford, pp. 36, 39.
- <sup>106</sup>Jesse, pp. 272-273; de Ford, pp. 47-49.

- <sup>107</sup>de Ford, p. 109.
- <sup>108</sup>Jesse, pp. 288-290.
- <sup>109</sup>de Ford, p. 26.
- <sup>110</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 206; Rimbault, pp. xiv-xix.
- <sup>111</sup>This and the following quotations from the poem may be found in Gifford-Dyce, iii, 332-333.
- <sup>112</sup>Gifford-Dyce, iii, 401.
- <sup>113</sup>See Rimbault, pp. 5-18, 280.
- <sup>114</sup>Jesse, p. 277.
- <sup>115</sup>Davies, p. 19.
- <sup>116</sup>Una M. Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama (London, 1935), p. 255.
- <sup>117</sup>Stuart Pratt Sherman, "Ford's Contribution to the Decadence of the Drama" in Shaping Men and Women (Garden City, New York, 1928), p. 224.
- <sup>118</sup>Williams, p. 206.
- <sup>119</sup>Wallace, p. 235. In The White Devil (III. ii) Webster refers to the legal technicality by which Raleigh's estate was seized:
- They are those brittle evidences of law  
Which forfeit all a wretched man's estate  
For leaving out one syllable.
- <sup>120</sup>For a general summary of the manners of the court see Jesse, pp. 67-81, and Jefferson Butler Fletcher, The Religion of Beauty in Women (New York, 1911), p. 172.
- <sup>121</sup>Cyril Falls, Mountjoy: Elizabethan General (London, 1955), p. 222.
- <sup>122</sup>Jesse, pp. 72-73. Later Harrington's letter becomes much exaggerated, but this section may be taken at face value.
- <sup>123</sup>Alfred H. Upham, The French Influence in English Literature From the Accession of Elizabeth to the Restoration (New York, 1911), pp. 315-316.

<sup>124</sup>Robert Ornstein, The Moral Vision of Jacobean Tragedy (Madison, Wisconsin, 1960), p. 201.

<sup>125</sup>Leech, p. 13.

<sup>126</sup>Cochlower, p. 261.

<sup>127</sup>Raybright first denies life is "worth the keeping" (I.i. 111), then later he becomes a slave to sensual pleasures.

<sup>128</sup>Louis B. Wright, Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England (Chapel Hill, 1935), p. 482.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid., p. 466.

<sup>130</sup>The Letters of John Chamberlain, ed. Norman Egbert McClure (Philadelphia, 1939), II, 289.

<sup>131</sup>Mary Leland Hunt, Thomas Dekker (New York, 1911), p. 124.

<sup>132</sup>Wright, pp. 481-482.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., p. 482; The Miscellaneous Works in Prose and Verse of Sir Thomas Overbury, Knt., ed. Edward F. Rimbault (London, 1890), pp. xiv-xviii.

<sup>134</sup>Wright, p. 483.

<sup>135</sup>Rimbault, pp. 20, 280.

<sup>136</sup>Wright, p. 491.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid., p. 494.

<sup>138</sup>Ibid., p. 489.

<sup>139</sup>Ibid., p. 497. Thomas Middleton notes the controversy in The World Tost at Tennis (1620), in which he says that a balladmonger never lacks subjects and lists the typical subjects of contemporary ballads: "one hangs himself today, another drowns himself to-morrow, a sergeant stabbed next day; here a pettifogger at the pillory, a bawd in the cart's nose, and a pander in the tail; hic mulier, haec vir, fashions, fictions, felonies, fooleries." See The Works of Thomas Middleton, ed. A. H. Bullen (New York, 1886), VII, 154.

<sup>140</sup>Wright. pp. 495-497.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid., p. 466.



- 142 Ibid., p. 502.
- 143 Ibid., pp. 499-500.
- 144 Thomas Dekker, The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London, ed. H. F. B. Brett-Smith (Oxford, 1922), p. 52.
- 145 Ibid.
- 146 Ibid., pp. 52-53.
- 147 William Stearns Davis, Life in Elizabethan Days (New York, 1930), p. 100.
- 148 William Haller, The Rise of Puritanism (New York, 1938), pp. 120-121.
- 149 Ibid., pp. 121-122.
- 150 Sargeaunt, p. 10.
- 151 Cochnower, p. 168.
- 152 G. F. Sensabaugh, "Love Ethics in Platonic Court Drama, 1625-1642," The Huntington Library Quarterly, I (1938), 277-304. This work is hereafter cited as "Love Ethics."
- 153 G. F. Sensabaugh, The Tragic Muse of John Ford (Stanford, 1944), pp. 109-126.
- 154 John Smith Harrison, Platonism in English Poetry of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (New York, 1903), pp. 155-156.
- 155 Upham, p. 328.
- 156 Sensabaugh, "Love Ethics," pp. 278-279.
- 157 Upham, p. 338.
- 158 Sensabaugh, "Love Ethics," pp. 299-300.
- 159 Ibid., p. 300.
- 160 Ibid., p. 301.
- 161 Haller, p. 308.
- 162 Sensabaugh, "Love Ethics," pp. 303-304.
- 163 Ibid., p. 304.

<sup>164</sup>William and Malleville Haller, "The Puritan Art of Love," The Huntington Library Quarterly, V (1942), 261.

<sup>165</sup>Ibid., p. 238.

<sup>166</sup>Ibid., pp. 263-264.

<sup>167</sup>Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>168</sup>Upham, p. 338.

<sup>169</sup>Ben Jonson's Plays, ed. Ernest Rhys (New York, 1960), II, 429. The subsequent citations from The New Inn are from this volume.

<sup>170</sup>Fletcher, p. 192.

<sup>171</sup>Ibid., p. 202. Waller's Sacharissa is Lady Dorothy Sidney, granddaughter of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland. Her father was the nephew of Sir Philip Sidney.

<sup>172</sup>Ibid.

<sup>173</sup>Ibid.

<sup>174</sup>Harrison, p. 156.

<sup>175</sup>Peter Ure, "Cult and Initiates in Ford's Love's Sacrifice," Modern Language Quarterly, XI (September, 1950), 300.

<sup>176</sup>Percy Addleshaw, Sir Philip Sidney (New York, 1909), pp. 323-324.

<sup>177</sup>Stuart Pratt Sherman, "Stella and The Broken Heart," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XXIV (June, 1909), 282.

<sup>178</sup>Ibid.

<sup>179</sup>Falls, p. 231; Addleshaw, p. 327.

<sup>180</sup>Gifford-Dyce, III, 279.

<sup>181</sup>Falls, pp. 225-226.

<sup>182</sup>Davies, p. 91; Falls, pp. 225-226, 229.

<sup>183</sup>Falls, p. 225.

<sup>184</sup>In "Stella and The Broken Heart."

<sup>185</sup>Campbell, pp. 304-306. Bowen, p. 399, says Villiers was "not more than thirty."

<sup>186</sup>Campbell, p. 312.

<sup>187</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 22; 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and The Broken Heart, ed. Stuart Pratt Sherman (Boston, 1915), p. xxxvi.

<sup>188</sup>Sherman, 'Tis Pity and The Broken Heart, p. xxxvi.

<sup>189</sup>Cochlower, p. 138.

<sup>190</sup>W. J. Courthope, A History of English Poetry (London, 1922), IV, 385.

<sup>191</sup>John Ford, ed. Havelock Ellis (New York, 1957), p. xiv.

<sup>192</sup>Ibid., p. xvi.

<sup>193</sup>See John Willcox, "On Reading John Ford," Shakespeare Association Bulletin, XXI (April, 1946), p. 74.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE NON-DRAMATIC WORKS OF JOHN FORD

The non-dramatic works of John Ford have never been given very much critical attention. There are many reasons why they deserve a good bit more than they have received. The most important of these works were written between 1606, the date of Fame's Memorial, and 1620, the date of A Line of Life. This is the period of Ford's maturity, from his twentieth to his thirty-fourth year. When Ford appears as an independent dramatist, with The Lover's Melancholy in 1628, he is a man of forty-two. By that age most of a man's basic attitudes have been formulated. If we are going to study the development of Ford's mind, we cannot do it in the plays--we must look at the works written between 1606 and 1620, the period in which Ford's mind was grappling with the problems of ideas and ideals which all men must face.

The recognition of Ford's values or ideals in the early non-dramatic works is extremely important. By its nature the drama is less subjective than a poem or prose work. Ford's tragedies have been called problem plays, and I believe that is a correct term to apply to them. In the problem play the dramatist's treatment must be objective. In sketching his dramatic problems--adultery in Love's Sacrifice and

incest in 'Tis Pity--Ford attempted to present both sides of the situations: he showed the attitudes of the lovers toward the loves which they thought pure, and he also showed the opinions of society toward the loves which it considered criminal. In the objective presentation of problems, Ford's own values are sometimes obscured--dramatic objectivity required the suppression of the author's subjective beliefs. Perhaps the primary importance of the early works--Honor Triumphant, Christ's Bloody Sweat, A Line of Life--is that they provide a gloss to aid in the interpretation of the dramas of the 1620's and 1630's.

These early works are of some significance also in showing the development of Ford's poetic art. Fame's Memorial is not a great poem; The Broken Heart is a great poem composed of many smaller great poems. Many of the same devices that Ford used in 1606 he used again in the tragedy published twenty-seven years later. Devices that failed in 1606 succeeded in 1633. We shall see why.

A few of the non-dramatic works written after 1620 are still extant. These are not particularly significant as far as Ford's art or thought is concerned, but they are interesting for the information they give us concerning Ford's biography--the men he knew, the opinions he had of them, for instance.

The first published works of John Ford appeared in 1606. Three poems and a prose pamphlet were printed in that



Fame's Memorial is an elegy for Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, the Earl of Devonshire, who had died early in 1606. The poem is dedicated to the Countess Penelope, the widow of the deceased earl.

In the first line of the prose dedication to the poem, Ford laments the "particular grief" (281) which he had felt at the earl's passing. The significance of Ford's phrase is unknown: the poet explicitly denies knowing the countess, and there is no record of his having been acquainted with the earl. Ford was from Devonshire and he was a member of an influential family of landed gentry; but these facts do not, of course, imply that Ford and Blount knew each other.

The dedication contains a thought that was to become customary with Ford: "Fate may be lamented, never recalled" (282)--the italics are Ford's own. Ford wishes to lament that which he cannot recall, the death of Devonshire. He asks the countess to forgive his presumption in doing so, for "neither mercenary hopes nor servile flattery have induced" (283) him to write the poem. He also defends himself against those outsiders who might misinterpret his purpose in writing the poem: "as for such who misdeem virtue without cause, innocency shall pity them, though not eagerly with mortal hate, yet simply with naked truth, to which envy is ever opposite" (283). Then, after confessing that his labors have hitherto been confined to the Inns of Court,

Ford delivers himself to the protection of his patroness, prefixing his signature with this compliment: "The honourer and lover of your noble perfections" (283).

Ford follows the dedication with an acrostic which spells out the name and title of Lady Blount. William Gifford has called this acrostic "the worst that ever passed the press."<sup>2</sup> Since the poem is of such notable rank, I give it here:

PErverse construction of a plain intent  
 NEither is scorn'd, respected, or despis'd:  
 LOsing of their slight loves who never meant  
 PEculiar knowledge, willingly is priz'd  
     CONTEnted happiness, Secur'd peace;  
     OF self-content is ever happiest ease.

DEVOTion to the careless is mere folly;  
 No SHallow envy of malicious IRE  
 Can move my resolution, grounded wholly  
 On hopes of better judgment; I desire  
     The favour of my favourers, not any  
     Unwilling eyes; I strive not to please many.

Fame's Memorial begins with the birth of Fame, whom Ford calls the daughter of Time. He contrasts Fame with Fear: the latter he not too democratically calls the "Herald to usher peasants to their graves" (286), while Fame is reserved to adorn nobility.

Ford wishes that his age contained a poet great enough to record Mountjoy's fame; but then he decides that all of the Muses together are not so truly worthy as Mountjoy. It is Fame herself, no mortal poet, who must imprint "in canons of eternal glory/Worth's monumental rites, great Mountjoy's story" (287), for there is no poet capable of honoring him



fully:

None him, he all can grace; his very story  
Gives laurel, to the writer crowns of bay;  
The title of his name attributes glory.

The lavish praise of Mountjoy runs through several stanzas ending with a passage in which the poet connects the lord's name with that of his brother-in-law, the Earl of Essex, whose "elate spirit" (288) was the legacy he left to Mountjoy.

Ford then begins a rapid sketch of Mountjoy's childhood, showing him to have been a discreet child and an intelligent student. After this the poet carries Mountjoy to court, a fitting place for him, because the "court should none but nobles entertain" (289) and because Mountjoy was truly noble:

Noble he was, in that he could not brook  
To have his equal or for sword or book.

At court the young lord immediately became the object of the admiration of "The saints of that smooth paradise resort" (290), which means, rather less poetically, the women of the court. Mountjoy was equal to the occasion: his conduct was always as it should have been. Since Ford has frequently been criticized as a sensualist, the stanzas dealing with the amorous activities of the court are worth quoting at length:

Here he began to taste the fragrant smack,  
The catapotion of heart-easing love;  
Here he persever'd to assault the wrack  
Of subtle passion, proving to disprove

That any soil firm-settled thoughts should move:  
Here was he first who taught what should be  
done,  
How ladies should be lov'd, serv'd, woo'd,  
and won.

In this secured solace of sweet peace  
He nurs'd his younger joys, nor wholly bent  
To wanton, sick, lascivious, amorous ease,  
But to more primer passions of content,  
Of civil mirth and jocund merriment:  
Mirth in his looks, and virtue in his  
tongue,  
Fresh as the balm, smooth as the mermaid's  
song.

Activity abroad, dalliance in chamber,  
Becomes a perfect courtier,--such was he;  
What maiden breast so nice as locks of amber  
Could not enchant with love's captivity?  
Free spirits soon are caught when slaves go free:  
What uncontrolled soul is so precise  
As may, yet will not, taste earth's paradise.

Ford does not appear in these stanzas as a defender of free love. The phrasing in the last stanza may cause some misunderstanding in this regard: "dalliance," "courtier," "taste earth's paradise" may seem to indicate a degree of libertinism. But in Honor Triumphant, Ford defines "dalliance" as "harmless play and sport" (350); and when he calls Mountjoy "a perfect courtier" he is stressing the connection between "courtier" and "courtesy"--"courtier" implying all that a well-bred gentleman should be. Ford was not alone in considering Mountjoy "a perfect courtier": Thomas Nashe called Charles Blount the successor to Sir Philip Sidney as a man of courtesy.<sup>3</sup> Whether "precise" and "uncontrolled" in the final couplet mean "puritanical" and "predestined" is unim-



Here again we can find nothing to justify condemning Ford for immorality as far as sins of the flesh are concerned. There is justification for the contrary opinion. Two significant lines appear in the third stanza of the passage: Ford says that those who abandon themselves to sensual pleasures lack "reason's measure." Ford ever valued human reason, and anything which betrayed this factor which distinguished man from beasts was abominable to him. His dissatisfaction with the sensuality of the court is fully evident (the court to which Blount had gone in his youth was, of course, Elizabeth's; but the court and courtiers that Ford has known in his four years in London have for the most part been James's, and it is the Jacobean court that he is describing here). In the final stanza "smicker" means "effeminate." Ford approves of Mountjoy's rejections of the effeminate court for, as the next few stanzas relate, such more manly exercises as falconry, the chase, the barriers.

Then, suddenly, after sketching the earl's youth, Ford breaks into an expression of grief over Devonshire's death from "vulgar censure's base unhappiness" (294):

Triumphant soul of such a prince-like lord,  
 O, I could dry the fountains of mine eyes  
 Upon thy coffin's hearse, and every word  
 Which sorrow should out sigh or grief implies,  
 I could resolve to drops of sacrifice,  
     And spend them on the ever-gaping womb  
     Of the unseason'd earth, thy sacred tomb.

(293)

Since we are unaware of any biographical connection between Ford and Mountjoy, it seems that the poet has protested his grief too much. And yet this sudden outburst of emotion is very affecting. The next stanza is less fine, though still very appealing in the tender expression of its sympathy:

The sweetest cygnet of thy comfort's heaven,  
Thy life's last paradise, thy heart's first  
love,  
Could not bemoan the loss of thee bereaven  
With more sweet-piercing plaints than I have  
strove  
To volly my discomforts, yet approve,  
Dear creature, thy too dearly bought  
distress  
By vulgar censure's base unhappiness.

(294)

Then, the poet bids himself to gain control of his passions. He knows he should not let the censure of the vulgar upset him. But he knows he will always remember the earl and weep when he does remember:

But, ah, be still thyself; let not defame  
Of the rude chaos aggravate thy woes;  
The multitude's blind slander is no shame;  
Rusticity his joy by malice knows,  
The better best in judging better shows:  
Let gross uncivil hinds regardless sleep;  
Remember thou thy loss, remembering weep.

(294)

The next few stanzas describe the reaction which certain men and various groups of men should have when they reflect on Devonshire's death. Two of the stanzas are quotable: in each the closing couplet is very fine:

Ye safe-secured fathers of wise peace,  
Just senators and magistrates in awe,

Wealthy home-breeders which engross your ease,  
 Ye learned legists of contentious law,  
 Ye rulers all who him victorious saw,  
     Fear ye like stroke as him of life deprives;  
     He was a brazen wall to guard your lives.

Double tongue-oiled courtiers, whose neat phrases  
 Do model forth your wits' maturity  
 In honey'd speeches and sick-thoughted graces,  
 Cloaking your souls in sin's obscurity,  
 Yet fan your lightness in security,  
     Weep on his reverend corse; for such as he  
     Now is, not as he was, yourselves shall be.

(295)

Ford's dislike of courtiers and his distrust of their flattery is vividly evident. Such as Mountjoy now is--dead--not as Mountjoy was--noble--they themselves shall be.

In the next few stanzas Ford sympathizes with the English soldiers who have lost their heroic leader, and he recounts some of the nobleman's early deeds as a warrior in preparation for his treatment of the earl's greatest victory, the conquest of Ireland. In order to treat the Irish campaign as it deserves, Ford feels that he needs the help of some goddess to inspire his muse. He thinks first of his own love, "Flint-hearted Lycia" (297), but rejects her in return for the Countess Penelope, whom he asks to "cast favour's glory, / While I inscribe great Mountjoy's Irish story" (297).

The stanzas connecting Mountjoy with Essex immediately follow. Devonshire seeks revenge against the Irish for his friend's downfall. With typically youthful exaggeration Ford writes of the earl's wrath and the fears of the

Irish at the very sound of Mountjoy's name. Mountjoy was, says Ford, noble in victory--he conquered, but spared his helpless defeated enemies. Mountjoy united the Irish and brought concord to their land. He brought together again relatives who had fought on different sides. He reconciled the Irish nobles to each other. He was the saviour as well as the conqueror of Ireland:

A land of penury, scarcity, and want  
 He hath enrich'd with plenty, ease, and store;  
 A land where human reason was most scant  
 He hath endow'd with wisdom's sacred lore,  
 Accosting it more fertile than before;  
     A land of barbarous inhumanity  
     He hath reduc'd to blessed piety.

(301)

Then Elizabeth died and Mountjoy was brought home in triumph and created Earl of Devonshire. He was loved by all except a few envious, and he retained his virtue and humility in the midst of his fame. Five successive stanzas begin with "True virtue grac'd his mind" (305-306), and Ford multiplies examples to prove this assertion. Ford moves immediately then to the marriage of Blount and Penelope Devereux. His opinion regarding the marriage is evident in the opening lines:

Link'd in the graceful bonds of dearest life,  
 Unjustly term'd disgraceful...

(307)

Penelope is described by the poet as

...that glorious star  
 Which beautified the value of our land,

The lights of whose perfections brighter are  
 Than all the lamps which in the lustre stand  
 Of heaven's forehead, by discretion scann'd;  
     Wit's ornament, earth's love, love's  
   paradise,  
 A saint divine, a beauty fairly wise.

(308)

Ford dwells on the love affair for six stanzas. He states in the last of these that he is defending the couple because he is convinced of their right:

Let merit take her due, unfee'd I write,  
 Compell'd by instance of apparent right  
 Nor chok'd with private hopes do I indite,  
 But led by truth as known as is the light,--  
 By proof as clear as day, as day as bright:

(309)

He returns then to Devonshire, "a theme of wonder"  
 (309), and connects the earl with his king:

As oft as James, the monarch of our peace,  
 Shall be in after-chronicles recited,  
 In that, to heaven's applause and subjects'  
   ease,  
 England and Scotland be in one united,  
 A sight with which true Britons were  
   delighted;  
     So oft shall thou eternal favour gain,  
     Who recollectedst Ireland to them twain.

(309)

Ford here approves of James for the same reason he does later in A Line of Life--James seeks peace for his country. Ford applauds the union of England, Scotland, and Ireland for the hope of peace that union brings. The patriotism of the next lines is interesting:

A work of thanks, in strengthening the force  
 Of such an entire empire now secure;



A world within itself, which, whiles the  
 Of heaven continueth lasting <sup>course</sup> [ , ] will endure,  
 Fearless of foreign power, strong and sure;  
 A bulwark intermur'd with walls of brass,  
 A like can never be, nor ever was.

(309)

The next stanzas are devoted to praise of Mountjoy's virtues in both peace and war. Ford lauds the earl for rising above his age:

Thou wert a phoenix; such a bird is rare,  
 Rare in this wooden age of avarice,  
 When thirst of gold, not fame, may best compare  
 With those of choicest worth, rich men are wise:  
 Honest, if honesty consist in vice:  
 Strong purses have strong friends; he hath  
 most praise  
 Who hast most wealth: O, blindness of our  
 days!

(310)

"O, blindness of our days!" All of this from a boy of twenty. Our poet has grown world-weary already.

One other stanza in praise of the earl is noteworthy for its suggestion of Ford's knowledge of the theory of the divine right of kings:

Two special beauties chiefly did adorn  
 His fair, unblemish'd soul and spotless mind;  
 To God religious he himself hath borne,  
 With zealous reverence in zeal enshrined;  
 And to his prince still loyal, ever kind:  
 At th' one's monarchic government he  
 trembled,  
 'Cause it the other's deity resembled.

(311)

The lavish praise of Charles Blount's virtue and abilities continues for several stanzas until Ford turns

again to the peer's passing. Ford, greatly pained by the nobleman's death, writes then of the transitory nature of existence. He rationalizes the situation. Death is not an evil. It has freed "the while-imprisoned soul," (315) and Devonshire now rests in peace:

Sleep still in rest, honour thy bones enshrine,  
Victorious lord, sweet peace attend thy grave;  
Mount thy best part with angel's wings divine,  
About the throne of Jove in quires to crave  
By madrigals the joys that thou wouldst have:  
So ever shall, while dates of times remain,  
The heavens thy soul, the earth thy fame  
contain.

(315)

The four following stanzas give more reasons why Devonshire's name shall never be forgotten. Each stanza ends with the refrain: "Then ever shall, while dates of times remain, The heavens thy soul, the earth thy fame contain" (315-316). The next stanza asserts that Devonshire, great as he was on earth, shall be still greater in heaven. After the next two stanzas Ford inserts nine epitaphs for Devonshire. When he returns to the poem itself, he explains the purpose of the epitaphs:

Lo, here Nine Tombs, on every tomb engrav'd  
Nine epitaphs, showing that Worthies Nine  
For each peculiar one a tomb hath crav'd,  
That their deserts, who while the Ly liv'd  
did shine,  
Might now be monumented in their shrine:  
Yet all those Nine no glory hence have  
gain'd,  
For Devonshire in himself all Nine contain'd.

(322)

The epitaphs add very little to the content of the poem. They merely repeat adulation for the earl and comment on mutability.

After the epitaphs, Ford repeats his grief before referring again to Lycia, his "flint-hearted" mistress. This autobiographical note is interesting:

Ah, that the goddess whom in heart I serve,  
 Though never mine, bright Lycia the cruel,  
 The cruel-subtle, would the name deserve  
 Of lesser wise, and not abuse the jewel  
 Of wit, which adds unto my flame more fuel:  
     Her thoughts to elder merits are confin'd,  
     Not to the solace of my younger mind.

(322)

One of the most eloquent stanzas in the poem comes shortly thereafter:

Sheathe-up the sword of war, for Mars is dead;  
 Seal-up the smoothed lips of eloquence,  
 For flowing Mercury is buried;<sup>4</sup>  
 Droop wisdom, Numa's grave intelligence  
 Is vanish'd, African's stout eminence  
     In Devonshire lies obscur'd, for he alone  
     Exceeded all; they all died in him one.

(323)

The next few stanzas are on death--death ends all, the poet says. He realizes at this time that there is no need to rail at death for taking Devonshire because the earl was more fit for heaven than for earth. Eight stanzas then comment of Devonshire's immortal bliss, the sins of earth which the earl left behind, and the blindness of those who did not appreciate the earl enough while he was here. Most of the lines in these stanzas are good: they move rapidly and are phrased

well. The first two stanzas in this section are quotable:

He was more fit for heaven than to survive  
 Amongst the chaff of this unseason'd age,  
 Where new fantastic joys do seek to thrive  
 By following sensual toys of folly's rage,  
 Making the gloss of vice true virtue's badge:  
     He saw that shame which misery begun it,  
     Seeing he did it scorn, and scorning shun it.

Hence sprung the venom of impoison'd hate,  
 Poor malediction's sting, who did despise  
 Bright honour's stamp, which in his bosom sate,  
 For that he could not brook to temporise  
 With humours masked in those times' disguise.  
     But let dogs bark, his souls above their  
   anger;  
     They cannot wound his worth with envy's  
   slander.

(325)

The poem travels rapidly to its end. The final stanzas are among the most moving in the elegy, as they point out the glory that has come to the soul of Charles Blount. With one last reference to Devonshire's rest beyond the ill uses of this world Ford concludes:

Above the reach of human wit's conceit,  
 Above the censure of depraved spite,  
 Above earth's paradise's counterfeit,  
 Above imagination of delight,  
 Above all thoughts to think or pens to write;  
     There doth he dateless days of comfort  
   spend,  
     Renowned in his life, blest in his end.

(326)

Fame's Memorial has never received critical approval.

The best that critics have usually been willing to do for the poem is to dismiss it as a youthful indiscretion. The one chief note of praise for it came from A. W. Ward, who

was in several ways kinder to Ford than were most of his contemporaries. Ward, after pointing out the occasional nature of the piece, said, "The poem seems to me above the average of such works; the closing stanza is particularly fine."<sup>5</sup> The stanza Ward was referring to is the one quoted immediately above. Fame's Memorial does not deserve the almost complete denigration it has received. It is in many ways a very interesting poem.

The elegy is a long and substantial effort for a young, unpracticed poet of twenty. The poem consists of 148 seven-line stanzas plus the nine epitaphs, which are in various forms. As stated earlier, the stanzaic form is acceptable--in a poem of this length it succeeds quite well.

There are many good passages in the elegy. We have noted several of these already, and there is no need to multiply examples. However, a close look at at least one stanza is justifiable:

Ye safe-secured fathers of wise peace,  
 Just senators and magistrates in awe,  
 Wealthy home-breeders which engross your ease,  
 Ye learned legists of contentious law,  
 Ye rulers all who him victorious saw,  
     Fear ye like stroke as him of life deprives;  
     He was a brazen wall to guard your lives.

(295)

The stanza is neatly ordered. The thought divides in accordance with the structural division--into groups of five and two lines. The poet addresses the various groups--men of power who themselves are held in awe by others, private

citizens engrossed in the ease of luxury, quarrelsome attorneys, rulers protected by the earl's valor in combat--all of these stand less secure now in their private pursuits. They must fear more than before--for their protector is there no more to safeguard their very lives. The thought is impressive.

The thought is also effectively expressed. In the opening line "safe-secured" is tautological, but the alliterating compound emphasizes the degree of complacency with which the men addressed have surrounded themselves, an idea which "peace" reinforces. For Ford "wise" is a very proper modifier of "peace"--to him the desire of a nation for peace is the height of wisdom. The second line is impressive. As a modifier "Just" is not particularly meaningful, but "awe" is a well-chosen word--those who are feared by others must be fearful themselves now that Devonshire is gone. The third line is elliptic but quite satisfactory. Ford means that the citizens are "engrossed in ease"--just as in Sonnet 129, Shakespeare means lust is "not to be trusted" when he says that lust is "not to trust." The alliteration of the next line is a good device, and the line is rather striking. The last line preceding the couplet involves an inversion as Ford strives to complete his rime, but the inversion is acceptable. In the couplet the opening syllables become tonic; Ford requires heavier accents here to emphasize the danger. Ford's use of "brazen wall" is very arresting; and in the



...we intend  
 To show the substance, not the shadow'd glose;  
 The praise we speak of doth itself commend,  
 And needs no ornament...

(310)

The chief fault of Fame's Memorial is its effusion. It is overlong. To control a work of one thousand or more lines was beyond Ford's capacities in 1606. The great length of the work led Ford into frequent repetitions--more than once he enumerates the same virtues of the earl, or chronicles the earl's death, or laments that no poet can do justice to the earl's greatness, or records his own grief at the earl's passing. Thus, much of the later part of the poem becomes tedious.

Stylistically, repetition was always a favorite device with Ford. He used it to achieve excellent effects in his plays, and it succeeds at times in this early poem, as in the five successive stanzas beginning with "True virtue grac'd his mind," and in the four successive stanzas ending with the couplet "Then ever shall, while dates of times remain/ The heavens thy soul, the earth thy fame contain"--in both of which the repetition creates an incremental effect. The last line of the following stanza makes the repetition of "Mountjoy" artistically and thematically purposeful:

Mountjoy, a name of grim severity;  
 Mountjoy, a name of meekness, peace, and love;  
 Mountjoy, a name to rein temerity;  
 Mountjoy, a name which virtue did approve;  
 Mountjoy, a name which joy did ever move;



Mountjoy, a charter of invicted fame:  
Yet Mountjoy was far greater than his name.

(300)

Ford's dramatic practice of repeating the final word or phrase at the opening of the next line may be seen frequently in Fame's Memorial:

Devonshire, I write of thee; a theme of wonder,  
Wonder unto posterity succeeding,

(309)

Thou wert a phoenix; such a bird is rare,  
Rare in this wooden age of avarice,

(310)

A curb unto the wise, to fools a terror,  
A terror of contempt, fear, hate, and shame,

(314)

True virtue grac'd his mind, applause his name,--  
Applause his name, which whiles the heavens  
divine  
Contain their lights upon the earth will shine.

(305)

This device is at times a very effective one, but in this poem Ford uses it too frequently.

Ford often carries his propensity for repetition a bit too far. Alliteration is not a frequent device with the poet; he preferred to go a sound or two beyond mere alliteration and the effect is dulling:

Here lies he dead, who living lived in fame,

(318)

Charles who, whilom whiles on earth he dwell'd,

(323)

The better best in judging better shows:

(294)

This bent of the young poet is sometimes displeasing--though such word play may be successful, as it is in the acrostic prefixed to the poem:

...I desire  
The favour of my favourers...

(284)

Where repetition is combined with Ford's characteristic desire for compounding, the effect can be very bad indeed:

He was the best, the most-most best of all;

(311)

Ford loves to hyphenate words, and the compounds thus created are one of his most flagrant stylistic faults. He calls Elizabeth "The ever-boast of England" (302). Mountjoy was "a peer of best-approved guise;" (311) he had "resolution-armed fortitude" (306); and he enjoyed "comfort-sweets" (307).

Not all such compounds are so bad as these. Some even achieve the effects the poet evidently desired for them:

Even as a quire of model-tuning birds,  
.....  
So this heart-stealing goddess charm'd  
their ears;

(III. 308)

...bright Lycia the cruel,  
The cruel-subtle...

(322)

The reference to a "heart-stealing goddess" is perhaps too

conventional--so may "mischief-breeding councils" (299) be--but they are effective. His early reference to "shrill-strain'd arts-men" (286) is partially questionable--"shrill-strain'd" could have been more easily phrased. The compound "arts-men" is acceptable; Ford must have liked it, for he uses "arts-men" in *The Lover's Melancholy* (V.I.99).

The stanzaic form of Fame's Memorial requires a great deal of control from a young poet, but Ford manages it fairly well. Many lines do have the feminine ending, but this extra syllable is a minor matter:

The lasting volume where worth roves uneven

(285)

By stern constraint, meek scorn, and willing  
blindness.

(307)

The extra syllable on one occasion receives stress for purposes of emphasis:

Are but as shadows which appear, but are not

(304)

Not all lines are pure iambic; Ford varies his meter occasionally:

Even so these courtiers flow'd in terms of  
words,

(308)

One b series is entirely in hexameters (assuming that Elizabethan pronunciation would give four syllables to the final word in each line):

Balanc'd in pithy scales of youth's discretion,  
 .....  
 Or schools' correct with deeper grave impression,  
 He scorn'd the mimic thoughts of base condition,

(289)

Ford managed his rime surprisingly well, but there are a few faults. He strained greatly to complete his rime in this couplet:

But sat with judgment to discern of laws  
 Which he had guarded with his sword's applause.

(303)

A few other rimes are rather weak, and in some couplets the poet fails to complete his rime:

Tigers and lions, boars, and raging bulls,  
 Hath he aton'd with leopards and wolves.

(301)

Sincerest justice is not to discern,  
 But to defend, aid, further, and confirm.

(306)

In one instance rime forces him into a slightly awkward inversion:

Then by a syllogistic kind of war,  
 He ruminates on thoughts which nobler are.

(289)

In the stanza which contains this couplet Ford is writing of Mountjoy's education, and he uses several Latinisms. The use of such words can hurt a line of poetry: "ruminates" seems rather indecorous; so do "nobilitated," "catapotion," and "delectation" in the following lines:

Enthron'd by fame, nobilitated ever.

(288)

The catapotion of heart-easing love;

(291)

While he enjoys his soul's high delectation!

(326)

But on one other occasion Ford builds a couplet with Latin polysyllables, and those resounding syllables give success to the lines:

A penitential contrite votary  
To sanctimonious, taintless purity.

(311)

The final fault we shall take notice of is this travesty of Hieronimo's famed soliloquy in the third act of Thomas Kyd's The Spanish Tragedy:

Life? ah, no life, but soon-extinguish'd tapers;  
Tapers? no tapers, but a burnt-out light;  
Light? ah, no light, but exhalation's vapours;  
Vapours? no vapours, but ill-blinded sight;  
Sight? ah, no sight, but hell's eternal night;  
A night? no night, but picture of an elf;  
An elf? no elf, but very death itself.

(314)

Admittedly Fame's Memorial has many faults. But as possibly the first work of a youth of twenty it seems a rather worthwhile and interesting production. Besides evidences of his thoughts and ideals and anticipations of stylistic and poetic elements in the plays generally, this early poem shows us that Ford was aware of the decadence of

the Jacobean court, that he had little reverence for courtiers, and that he had no respect for sensuality. This last fact will become more important as we look at Honor Triumphant.

A prose tract and a short poem related to it also appeared in 1606. The two works were printed in the same edition, and the full title of that volume is significant: Honor Triumphant: or the Peeres Challenge, by Armes defensible, at Tilt, Turney, and Barriers. In honor of all faire Ladies, and in defence of these foure positions following.  
1 Knights in Ladies' service have no free-will. 2 Beauty is the maintainer of valour. 3 Faire Lady was never false. 4 Perfect lovers are onely wise. Mainteined by Arguments.  
Also the Monarches Meeting: or The King of Denmarkes welcome into England.

The prose piece is a fairly lengthy defense of the four Platonic codes mentioned on the title page, and Ford makes some rather startling statements in this defense. In support of the first proposition he says: "Who would not put off an armour of hard steel, and turn from his enemies, to be enchained in pleasure, and turn to a lady in a bed of soft down?" (344). In the second section he writes that "for men to be honored of ladies is the scope of all felicity" (356). As proof of the third proposition he repeats the Platonic tenet that "as the outward shape is more singular, so the inward virtues must be more exquisite" (359). He defends

the fourth proposition by stating that "Lovers are perfectly wise, and simply perfect, insomuch as nothing is more expedient to the full accomplishment of a wise man than to be a lover" (371). The prose is interspersed with several poems, one of which contains this naughtily explicit passage:

Alas, what is it, then, that men in bed  
Will not vow, urge, to gain a maidenhead!  
Which being got, they ever after stand  
Devoted to their ladies' dear command.

(345)

Such isolated passages as these abound in the tract, and they are largely responsible for the general opinion that Honor Triumphant is an immoral work. The similarity between Ford's four codes and the theories of love and beauty sponsored by Queen Henrietta Maria are immediately evident; this fact has been the basis for many critical assertions that Ford was a worshipper of the Platonic laws of the Caroline court. All in all, Honor Triumphant has been one of the more damning works against Ford's reputation. It was of Honor Triumphant that Emile Legouis was primarily thinking when he wrote that "Some youthful verse and prose" show Ford to have been "an amoral pagan."<sup>6</sup> G. F. Sensabaugh has criticized the dramatist's morals because certain statements in Honor Triumphant indicate to him that Ford "would have us believe that any vagary of love is pure if founded in beauty."<sup>7</sup> Stuart Sherman pounced upon the four codes as positive proof of Ford's moral shortcomings and his preoccupation with ideas from chivalric romance and the Platonic

doctrines of love. Sherman concluded that Ford was an advocate of free love:

The ardor and earnestness of Ford's style suggest that the leading propositions of this pamphlet were to him not merely a set of pretty paradoxes, but a religion. The worship of beauty, the fatality of love, the glorification of passion--these were the first fruits of an aristocratic and highly captivating mode of free thought, independent alike of public opinion, common morals, laws, and religion...at times even clashing sharply with them.<sup>8</sup>

Knowledge of the events which prompted Ford's work and a close scrutiny of the work itself will indicate that the reasoning of Sherman and the others is incorrect.

Honor Triumphant was written after the visit of King Christian of Denmark in 1606. A defense of the four codes mentioned by Ford in his tract were a part of the festivities celebrating that visit. The four propositions were originally propounded in the old chivalric manner by the "four Knights Errant of the Fortunate Islands (Earls of Lenox, Arundel, Pembroke, and Montgomery)," who offered to maintain these propositions against all honorable "Men at Arms, Knights, Adventurers of Hereditary Note, that for most maintainable actions wield the sword or lance, in the quest of glory."<sup>9</sup> The humor and mock solemnity of the occasion is apparent, and it is known that even King James was much amused by the entire proceedings.<sup>10</sup>

All Ford has done, then, is to take the propositions of the Knights and elaborate upon them--his reason for doing



so is unknown, but it is certainly not that the codes form a "religion" for him. It is significant that the tract is dedicated "To the Rightly Honourable, and truely worthy Ladies, the Countesse of Pembroke and the Countesse of Mountgomeri" (338), the wives of two of the earls who propounded the original codes. And each of the four defenses is dedicated to one of the "Knights Errant." Under such dedication and such address it is inconceivable that Ford would have written other than in defense of the propositions. The major question concerns the degree to which Ford was taking his defense seriously.

It seems quite likely that with Honor Triumphant Ford was merely entering into the fun of the occasion. The entire work is highly artificial. Ford's thoughts are commonplace, but his expression is very affected and bombastic.

An instance in point is Ford's defense of the second proposition, that "Beauty is the maintainer of valour." Ford says: "So known is the certainty of this position et domi et foris, that whosoever would seem ignorantly strange would but bewray his strangely-rude ignorance in seeming so. Beauty, say we, is the maintainer of valour. Who is so blunt as knows it not? Who is so blockish as will not--and may with justice--defend it. An instance, even in the entrance, shall be no absurdity" (351). Ford then gives as an example to prove his point, the development of kissing, first instituted, he says, by the Sabine women as a reward to the Romans for

their valor in forcefully winning and ravishing them. Ford then continues:

For although in the eyes of some more stoical censurers kissing seems but a needless ceremony, yet in the feeling of love it is the first taste of love, the first certainty of hope, the first hope of obtaining, the first obtaining of favour, the first favour of grant, the first grant of assurance, the first and principalest assurance of affection, the first shadow of the substance of after-contented happiness, happy pleasure, pleasing heaven. But to our matter (352).

Ford then returns to his "matter."

Now this may seem to some to be the passionate outpouring of a poet's heartfelt beliefs; but in context the phrases "some more stoical censurers," and "needless ceremony," the repetitive artificiality of structure, and the rapid transition of the last sentence sound like something less than heartfelt utterances. Perhaps Ford is writing in the broad tradition of courtly playfulness persisting at least since Euphues. At any rate he is obviously having fun with his subject. This next citation should be sufficient proof of this assertion:

Beauty! This is that Achilles' impenetrable shield which every Ulysses pleads for, every Ajax fights for; this is that golden fleece which the Argonauts sued to find, which Jason toiling enjoyed; this is that famed trophy which Philip would have his son Alexander in the game of Olympus to wrestle for. How much are they deceived--I mean those fainter bloods--who vainly imagine that soldiers fight for spoil only, generals hazard their persons for greediness, seamen traffic for avarice, knights wander for prey, or that any jeopard his life chiefly for lucre! Does not the merchant ven-

ture shipwreck to return with a present that may purchase his lady's liking, and in her liking his own bliss? Does not the soldier fight abroad to preserve his lady in safety at home? Does not the general command, that he may return with victory gracious in his lady's eyes? Does not the knight-errant attempt threatenings of horror, adventures of dread, thunder of death itself, only to rumour his fame in the ears of his lady? Does he not range for the succour of beauty, for the freedom of beauty, for the joy of beauty? And all spoil that the soldier bleeds for, all the greediness that commanders sweat for, all the avarice that the merchant trades for, all the prey that the knight adventures for, all the benefit that everyone and all these hope, wish, pray, contend for, is the fruition of beauty; than which nothing can be more grateful, nothing is so acceptable (353).

Can any critic dare assert that John Ford, even at the youthful age of twenty, really believed everything that he put in Honor Triumphant so devoutly that that work is a statement of his religion? Clearly, Sherman and the others have taken this slight piece too seriously.

Humorous by-play runs throughout the work. It will be well to keep this fact in mind as we look more closely at the defenses. Ford appears at his very naughtiest in the first section, where he illustrates the proposition that knights have no free will when in the service of ladies. He begins with an insult: "How certain it is, both by the tradition of ancient and modern judgments avowed, that every man is not born for himself, the communication of the saw and the authority of reason shall be a privilege sufficient; but how much mistaken both the philosophers of old and later

neoterics have been, their own ignorance makes manifest" (343). They are ignorant, in Ford's opinion, because "A man, say they, is partly born for his country, partly for his parents, partly for his friends; nothing, or--if anything yet--least and lastly for himself" (343). Ford admits that all this is true, but he objects that something has been left unsaid--"yet had the sensible touch of passion touched them with the feeling of a passionate sense, how much more, and more truly, might they have affirmed, that the chiefest creation of man was--next his own soul he does at least allow the soul precedence over woman7--to do homage to the excellent frame of beauty--a woman!" (343). Now the author must needs grow ecstatic: "a woman, the art of nature, the lively perfection of heaven's architecture" (343). The artificiality in style, the exaggerated pomposity in the opening lines, the ever-present undertone of mocking humor make it very difficult for me to take Ford seriously.

There are several significant passages in this opening section. Ford's chief point in defense of the proposition is that to have one's will enslaved by a woman is no enslavement at all--"Love's captivity is freedom's enfranchisement, and whosoever is a prisoner to the merit of fairness is absolutely naturalised a denizen to happiness" (350). The honor and person of the knight who is powerless before the force of love are not in any danger, says Ford--for

"although he be bound to undergo her pleasure, so he shall undertake no shame that may displease; for from the fair proceeds nothing but what is fair. Ladies are mild and fearful to impose dangers; wise and will prevent them, especially such dangers as either may threaten inglorious dishonor, or likely peril to their beloved" (350).

The above passage concerning physical dangers is important. Ford seems not to have liked war at all--he praised James as a peacemaker, and he approved the union of Denmark and England for the hope of peace and security it brought. Ford recognized two functions for a knight: to war and to love. He knew which was most desired: "Mars throws down his weapons, and Venus leads him captive...How then? must he yield? true; not to captivity, but freedom; for to be captived to beauty is to be free to virtue" (344). Then comes that wicked passage, "Who would not put off an armour of hard steel, and turn from his enemies to be enchained in pleasure, and turn to a lady in a bed of soft down?" (344). In this context and with its specific application to the story of Mars and Venus, with its general symbolic reference to war and love, the passage does not seem quite so immoral as it did when taken in the raw. Ford answers his own rhetorical question with this bit of word-spinning: "Foolish hardiness is hardened foolishness, when securest love is the loveliest security" (345).

Ford knows the effect of passion, the extremities of

action unrequited love can lead to. To illustrate this he inserts a poem on Cupid in the text. Cupid, who though himself above the force of love, often toyed wantonly with nymphs. But then one day, "Cupid with Psyche fell in love" (345), and "Love now captiv'd his heart, which erst was free" (345). The stanza immediately following is this:

Love hath no power ere he gain his rest  
 But to impawn, swear, promise, and protest:  
 Alas, what is it, then, that men in bed  
 Will not vow, urge, to gain a maidenhead!  
 Which being got, they ever after stand  
 Devoted to their ladies dear command.

(345)

Unrequited love, the madness or melancholy of love, is a danger leading to extremities. When love is brought to fruition there is peace and man can give devotion to his lady and receive it in turn--"To love is common to sensuality, but to be beloved is the crown of desert" (348). True love will not admit of selfishness; a true lover thinks only of his love--not of himself: that is why knights who serve ladies have no freedom of will. Ford cites a text to prove this point, but even here a faint note of humor creeps in: "For well said the poet,"--then he pauses with "whosoever said it"--before giving the line "Non minor est virtus quam quaerere parta tueri" (349).

In the third defense, Ford writes, "Yet ere I wade further, and be gravelled in the ooze and quicksand of my own intention...I confess--and blush that occasion should be

ministered of confession--that many there are whose bewitching looks draw youth into folly...." (364). If Ford really blushed at the admission of such a thing, he would hardly have admitted the fact in print.

Actually, Ford does not go to great extremes in his defense of the proposition that "Fair lady was never false." He makes a distinction between "fair" and "lovely"--"fair" refers to true beauty, which involves inner beauty; "lovely" refers to outer beauty, which may be the result of art rather than virtue. This is the distinction Ford is thinking of in his concluding paragraph to the section. Note the artificial bombast of the lines. Note also the curse with which Ford closes--he cannot be writing a serious testimonial of love:

Every fair lady is lovely, but every lovely lady is not fair... What should I more say? and yet what have I said that is enough? what that can be too much, and yet what is not too much? since the only experience of the subject commendeth his own worthiness, to such, then, as credit it, I wish them a fair lady: to misbelievers and infidels in love this curse: May their ladies be foul, and so be loathsome; yet false, and repay them with the common crest of horns!

(366)

We shall find that Ford is paying lip service to woman, that he is but taking advantage of the present fashion. Let us never forget also that Ford is but twenty years old--even if some observers must remain set in their antique and mistaken notions that Honor Triumphant is an

immoral or amoral work, they must not consider that the tract proves the decadence of the ideas stated by Ford in his plays, for midway between Honor Triumphant and 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Love's Sacrifice comes the most significant of Ford's non-dramatic works, A Line of Life, and that generally disregarded prose treatise is a corrective to mistaken critical notions about the works which preceded it as well as being a significant and enlightening commentary on the plays which were to follow.

Ford frequently repeats ideas and phraseology. In Honor Triumphant he cited Aristotle's axiom that "The temperature of the mind follows the temperature of the body" (359) as indication that a fair lady was also virtuous. In A Line of Life Ford repeats the axiom almost verbatim, but considerably expands his interpretation of the significance of Aristotle's words. His statements must be quoted at length.

A man's mind is the man himself, said the Roman orator /Cicero/; and the chiefest of the Grecian naturalists /Aristotle/ was confident to aver that the temperature of the mind followed the temperature of the body. It were a lesson worthy to be conned, if either of those rules may be positively received; for out of the first, as any man feels his inclinations and affections, thereafter let him judge himself to be a man: out of the latter it may be gathered, how easy it were for every man to be his own schoolmaster in the conformation or reformation of his life, without other tutor than himself.

(392)

Thus far, Ford has merely repeated the words of Cicero and



Aristotle, recognizing that, if true, these ancient thoughts are of value to all men. The succeeding paragraph cites Socrates to qualify Aristotle:

Socrates his speech of the use of mirrors or looking-glasses concludes whatsoever can be ranged in many words of this subject.... "When thou viewest thyself in a mirror," said that wise man, "surveyest thy complexion, thy proportion, if thy face be more fair, lovely, and sweeter than others, thy body straighter, thy lineaments perfecter, consider how much more thou art bound by that to match those blessings of nature with the accomplishment of more noble qualities than others of a coarser mould. If, on the other side, thou perceive thy face deformed, thy body crooked, thy outward constitution unsightly or misshapen, by so much the more hast thou reason to live a good life, that thereby concord of virtuous conditions may supply the defects of nature, and make thee more beautiful inwardly to the eye of judgment than outwardly thou couldst have been to the eyes of popular delight."

(392-393)

Socrates recognized that an inner beauty could be discerned by the judgment, even though the outward form were not pleasing; Ford recognizes the same truth. Then Ford speaks of reason or judgment:

In short, to be a man, the first branch of resolution is to know, feel, and moderate affections, which, like traitors and disturbers of peace, rise up to alter and quite change the laws of reason, by working in the feeble, and oftentimes the sounder parts, an innovation of folly. He can seldom be a flourishing member of a body politic, and so a public deserving man, but more rarely, scanty ever, a reconciler of divisions, and so a civil good man for others, that begins not betimes to discharge his own duty to himself. The old proverb was,--and it is lamentable to speak with truth, and say

it is,--that a man is a beast to a man; but it must be of necessity granted, when a man to himself is a monster, or more proverbially, a devil.

(393)

Ford agrees with Cicero that the "mind is the man." A man must "know, feel, and moderate affections," says Ford; reason must always guide the direction of his mind. Ford had written of the necessity of moderating affections in Honor Triumphant, where he said that "they best deserve to be beloved who deserve love, and they principally deserve love who can moderate their private affection" (348), that is to say that they most deserve to love who are desirous not of their own pleasure, but of the pleasure of the ones they love.

In Honor Triumphant Ford pointed out the difference between true beauty and art--using Helen as a primary example. In A Line of Life he returns to this theme to support his arguments in the long paragraphs quoted above. Ford gives an example to show the destructive difference between art and beauty (the italics are mine):

It is said of Caius Curio, that he was a man most wittily wicked and most singularly eloquent in mischief against the commonwealth. What rarities were here lost--like a diamond set in a rushen ring /like true beauty harmed by artifice/! How much better had it been for him to have had a duller brain, if better employed, and a slower tongue, if available for the public good! Every man should, in his own person, endeavor and strive to be like Cato's orator, a good man, and expert in pleading. First good, then expert; for of so much richer

price is virtue than art: art without virtue being like the cantharides, whose wings pulled off, they have pretty colours to please the eye, but poisonous substances to be received into the stomach.

(393-394)

First goodness! Always with Ford goodness is the prime requisite. If other things are built on a foundation of goodness, then they too will be good. From goodness, expertness and greatness may proceed.

There is a great deal of similarity in thought and in phrasing between Honor Triumphant in 1606 and A Line of Life in 1620. The true meanings of Ford's statements in the earlier work are vague and indefinite because Ford is toying with his subject. The statements in A Line of Life are perfectly clear, and they help us to understand the real significance and the proper interpretation of Honor Triumphant. Harsh critics of Ford must also recall that in the long work which preceded Honor Triumphant--Fame's Memorial--there is not one single line that gives justification to charges that Ford was immoral or amoral. Honor Triumphant comes between Fame's Memorial and A Line of Life. The moralist of Fame's Memorial and A Line of Life could not have intended the intervening work to be of questionable morality.

Even Lord Harrington, who appeared to be a stern moral censor of the activities of the court during the visit of King Christian, allowed himself a moment of fun at the expense of the revellers. Though he complained that "The ladies

abandon their sobriety, and are seen to roll about in intoxication," he described with some levity an entertainment provided by the Earl of Salisbury:

The entertainment and show went forward,  
and most of the presenters went backward...;  
wine did so occupy their upper chambers.

Now did appear in rich dress, Hope Faith,  
and Charity; Hope did assay to speak, but wine  
rendered her endeavours so feeble that she  
withdrew, and hoped the king would excuse her  
levity. Faith was then all alone; for I am  
certain she was not joined to good works, and  
left the court in a staggering; Charity came  
to the king's feet, and seemed to cover the  
multitude of sins her sisters had committed....  
She then returned to Faith and Hope, who were  
both sick in the lower hall.

Next came Victory, in bright armour, and  
presented a rich sword to the king.... But  
Victory did not triumph long; for after much  
lamentable utterance, she was led away by a  
silly captive, and laid to sleep in the outer  
steps of the antechamber.

Now did peace make entry, and strive to  
get foremost to the king; but I grieve to tell  
how great wrath she did discover unto those of  
her attendants; and much contrary to her sem-  
blance, made rudely war with her olive-branch,  
and laid on the pates of those who did oppose  
her coming.<sup>11</sup>

Harrington's long letter indicates that he was highly disgusted by the excesses of the English court; yet he did allow himself a moment of humor in the midst of his disgust.

Ford was always respectful toward the members of the weaker sex, and he seems to have valued the love of man and woman as one of the noblest of earthly blessings. But his exaggerated affectation in Honor Triumphant cannot be taken too seriously--just as Harrington's levity cannot be accepted at face value. Ford wrote the work with his tongue in his cheek; it is a tour de force, nothing more.

At the end of Honor Triumphant Ford has added a short poem entitled The Monarch's Meeting; or The King of Denmark's Welcome into England. The poem divides into three parts. The first records the meeting between James and Christian on the Thames in the harvest-season of 1606. Ford praises each king extravagantly, rejoicing in the amity between their two countries: "How strengthen'd are those empires with safe bliss/ Where two such princes join in unity!" (375). This couplet seems to represent Ford's chief point of emphasis. He heartily approves of the union of England and Denmark, for both countries thereby strengthen themselves and present a formidable defense against their war-like neighbors. It is on this note that Ford closes:

England with Denmark, Denmark eke with us,  
 Are firmly now in league, conjoin'd in one:  
 Seven kingdoms now again united thus  
 Are strengthen'd, so as stronger can be none;  
 Then, as a certain and well-wishing greeting,  
 We thus applaud the monarch's happy meeting.

(376)

There are a few lines in this section that are of value, but there are no stanzas that are completely flawless. The following stanza is typical of the effusion in this laboured effort:

Two kings in England have been rarely seen,  
 Two kings for singularity renown'd;  
 The like before hath hardly ever been,  
 For never were two with more honour crown'd.

(376)

This stanza evinces most of the worst faults of the piece--

the first line is quite useless, the third is very awkward, the fourth is utterly untrue.

Ford shifts stanzaic forms when he begins the second section, his greeting to the Danish king. The first part is in quatrains, with a closing couplet added to the final stanza. The second part is in rimed couplets. Again the uppermost thought in Ford's mind is the promise of peace which the union of the two nations brings:

Betwixt our realm and thine a long liv'd peace:  
Whiles thoughts are undefil'd and credit true,  
From age to age this league will still renew;

(377)

This part is far more interesting than the first. Ford pledges the friendship of his nation in this way:

We are not subtle French, to fawn and flatter;  
Nor Spaniards, hot in show, yet cold in matter;  
Trothless Italian; fleeting Irish wiles,  
Whose trust when most protesting most beguiles;  
We deem dishonour German policies;  
Or everchanging Indian fopperies  
We spurn.

(377)

The strongly chauvinistic note continues:

Know we are English, hating wrongs,  
Bearing our thoughts decipher'd in our tongues;  
Rather the sun may in his courses alter  
Than we in true-meant trust our promise falter:  
.....  
..... we ever chose  
To die with fame than live with infamy,  
Purchas'd with disesteemed treachery.

(377)

At the end of the section Ford writes of England's rejoicing at the foreign king's safe arrival. The people

greet him with a song; this song comprises the third and final section of the poem. "The Applause-Song For the King of Denmark's Arrival" consists of two strophes of complex and varying structure. The song adds nothing new to the poem.

It seems unlikely that Ford, after writing four works within the space of a year, would then remain idle for seven years. Nor does it seem likely that he would publish two very long works in 1613, and then refrain from literary endeavor (except for two pieces on Sir Thomas Overbury) for another seven years. Yet that is the conclusion that the facts of history lead us to accept. It is evident that Ford's biography is full of many unanswered questions.

When Ford did return to literature in 1613, he wrote a long religious poem entitled Christ's Bloody Sweat, or The Son of God in his Agony. This poem was signed merely "J.F.," and it was long thought to be the work of Joseph Fletcher; but in the third volume of Chorus Vatum, Joseph Hunter recorded that "Mr. B. H. Bright was convinced that a poem entitled Christ's Bloody Sweat or the Son of God in His Agony, 1613, of which there is a copy in the Malone Collection, No. 297, was by Ford. The dedication to Will, Earl of Pembroke, is signed J. F. and he perceives strong points of resemblance between it and the dedication of The Broken Heart and Tis Pity She's &c."<sup>12</sup>

This hint led Miss Sargeaunt to the poem, and she found sufficient evidence to indicate that the poem was by





Now to behold the Lord in blood, then hover  
For where the Word doth tel us Christ did  
bleed,  
And sweat, there must our thoughts both  
drink & feed.<sup>15</sup>

This idea is repeated in the plays. It occurs in The Broken Heart and in Love's Sacrifice, and it is propounded at length in 'Tis Pity. The fact that this devout religious poem should be associated with 'Tis Pity may give a hint to the complexity of that tragedy.<sup>16</sup> In 'Tis Pity the Friar, astonished at Giovanni's lust, sends him to repentance with this charge:

Hie to thy father's house; there lock thee fast  
Alone within thy chamber; then fall down  
On both thy knees, and grovel on the ground;  
Cry to thy heart; wash every word thou utter'st  
In tears--and if't be possible--of blood:  
Beg Heaven to cleanse the leprosy of lust  
That rots thy soul;

(1. i. 116-117)

There are several other passages in both the poem and the play which state the same religious viewpoint.

One of the most interesting of Miss Sargeaunt's arguments is her comparison of the tortures of Hell in Christ's Bloody Sweat and in the Friar's advice to Annabella in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore. The poem reads:

Here shall the wantons for a downy bed,  
Be rackt on pallets of stil-burning steele:  
Here shall the glutton, that hath dayly fed,  
On choice of daintie diet, hourelly feelee  
Worse meat then toads, and beyond time be  
drencht  
In flames of fire, that never shalbe quencht.

Each moment shall the killer, be tormented  
With stabbes that shall not so procure his death:  
The drunkard that would never be contented

With drinking up whole flagons at a breath,  
 Shal be deni'd (as he with thirst is stung)  
 A drop of water for to coole his tongue.

The mony-hoording Miser in his throat  
 Shall swallow molten lead:17

The Friar's speech to Annabella is very similar:

There is a place--  
 List, daughter!--in a black and hollow vault,  
 Where day is never seen; there shines no sun,  
 But flaming horror of consuming fires,  
 A lightless sulphur, chok'd with smoky fogs  
 Of an infected darkness: in this place  
 Dwell many thousand thousand sundry sorts  
 Of never-dying deaths: there damned souls  
 Roar without pity; there are gluttons fed  
 With toads and adders; there is burning oil  
 Pour'd down the drunkard's throat; the usurer  
 Is forc'd to sup whole draughts of molten gold;  
 There is the murderer forever stabb'd,  
 Yet can he never die; there lies the wanton  
 On racks of burning steel, whiles in his soul  
 He feels the torment of his raging lust.

(III.vi. 164)

Miss Sargeaunt does admit that both of these passages could have a common ancestor in a passage from Thomas Nashe's Pierce Penniless. Stuart Sherman had previously noted the similarity between the Friar's frightening words and the lines by Nashe which describe Hell as "A place of horror, stench, and darknesse, where men see meat but can get none, or are ever thirstie, and readie to swelt for drinke, yet have not the power to taste the coole streames that runne hard at their feet...he that all his life time was a great fornicator, hath all the diseases of lust continually hanging upon him... as so of the rest, as the usurer to swallow molten gold, the glutton to eate nothing but toades, and the Murtherer to bee

still stabd with daggers, but never die."<sup>18</sup> Despite the existence of Nashe's work, the similarity between the play and the earlier poem containing various other traces of Ford is impressive evidence of the single authorship of the two pieces.

The form of Christ's Bloody Sweat is very close to that of Fame's Memorial; the only difference is that the elegy employed a stanza of seven lines, whereas the religious poem uses a six-line stanza--which is, as a matter of fact, the form Ford used in his poem to Barnabe Barnes. There are several stylistic similarities between the two long poems; the chief of these, repetition, deserves close notice. As in Fame's Memorial, the last word or phrase of a line in Christ's Bloody Sweat is frequently repeated at the opening of the next line:

Whose price is life, which life, death  
underproppes.  
Death underpropp's that life...

He lost his life; and yet he knew no sin.  
He knew no sinne,...<sup>19</sup>

Repetition from stanza to stanza is evident in both poems. In the poem of 1613 several successive stanzas begin or end with the same or nearly the same phrasing. Three begin with "Christs Bloody sweat"; ten begin with "Here saw he:" And five stanzas end with the following couplet, or one very near to it in wording:

When they were clad God's glory for to see,  
The only wordes he us'd, were follow mee.<sup>20</sup>

An elaborate repetitive structure within a single stanza occurs in both poems. The stanza in Fame's Memorial in which every line but the last begins with "Mountjoy" may be recalled for comparison with

Dull eares who will not listen to this call?  
 Dull eyes who will not see this fount of ease?  
 Dull heart that will not shun temptations gall?  
 Dull soule that will not seeke this God to please?  
     Dul eares, dul eyes, dul heart, dul soule,  
   whose strife  
     Nor heares, nor sees, nor thinks, nor seeks  
   for life.<sup>21</sup>

All of this evidence, thematic and stylistic, supports the contention that Ford is the writer of the poem. But if we assume Ford's authorship, a question remains. Christ's Bloody Sweat is a long work, and it reflects intense religious conviction. This religious intensity is not found elsewhere in Ford's works--not even in The Golden Mean, which was also published in 1613. The Golden Mean is not irreligious, nor is A Line of Life, nor for that matter is The Broken Heart--Ford is simply noncommittal on religious questions. We may choose to assume that Ford's beliefs changed after he published his long religious poem, leaving it a unique element in the canon. At any rate, it does seem probable that Christ's Bloody Sweat is the work of John Ford.

Christ's Bloody Sweat is a very long poem consisting of 318 six-line stanzas. Sargeaunt thought the poem "of no very great poetic merit,"<sup>22</sup> but she considered it superior to Fame's Memoriall.<sup>23</sup> Oliver thinks the poem "a remarkable improve-

ment on Fame's Memoriall." He gives his reasons for thinking so: "everything in Christes Bloodie Sweat is at least said clearly. The poet is attempting also to avoid monotony; he breaks up his narrative and exhortation with dialogue, semi-dialogue and questions and answer...." In these respects the poem does differ from its predecessor, but Oliver's other reasons are less valid: "his versification shows many variations on the normal iambic pentameter: there are dozens of reversed stresses, many lines have extra syllables (there is at least one Alexandrine and others gain emphasis by omission of a syllable.... In short, you could say of Christes Bloodie Sweat, as you could not say of Fames Memoriall, that the author is beginning to be interesting as a poet."<sup>24</sup> As we previously noticed, Fame's Memorial also had frequent variations: feminine endings, anapests modulating the iambic lines, and some hexameter lines--Oliver seems pleased that Christ's Bloody Sweat has "at least one Alexandrine;" we noted three in one stanza of Fame's Memorial. Concerning Christ's Bloody Sweat Clifford Leech says, "Certainly there is nothing of affectation or forced labour here. We may not like the poem, but it is as sincere as any piece of seventeenth-century puritan literature."<sup>25</sup>

This tone of sincerity makes the poem useful as a gloss for the plays, and it may also lead us to accept some of the statements in the work as revealing insights into Ford's life. The autobiographical element in the dedication of Christ's



Stuart Sherman, it must be stated that he never knew of Ford's authorship of this long religious poem; but Ford's detestation of sensuality is clearly stated in A Line of Life, and Sherman should have noted it there. He might also have given more credence to Giovanni's words in 'Tis Pity:

O, that it were not in religion sin  
To make our love a god, and worship it!

(1.iii. 122)

The imagery of one stanza shows Ford's familiarity with the stage:

He di'd indeed not as an actor dies  
To die to day, and live againe to morrow,  
In shew to please the audience, or disguise  
The idle habit of inforced sorrow:  
The Crosse his stage was, and he plaid  
the part  
Of one that for his friend did pawne his  
heart<sup>30</sup>

and there is some dramatic feeling in the passage in which a father tells his child of Christ's agony:

A lovely Sonne (my childe) a daintie boy,  
Who had a cheek as red as any cherie,  
Sweete babie, was his mothers only joy,  
And made her heavie heart full often merie:  
Who, though he were Gods Son, yet like a  
stranger,  
Hee in a stable borne was, in a manger.  
And poore, God knowes he was, (my childe) not  
fine,  
Or like a gentleman in gay attyre:  
But simple clothes hee had, which was a signe  
How little to be proud, hee did desire:  
Yet if hee would have sought for wordly  
grace,  
He might have gone in silke, and golden  
lace.<sup>31</sup>

Christ's Bloody Sweat is in many ways an interesting

poem, and it is very valuable because it shows a side of Ford that we do not otherwise see. However, it does not seem to me to show the great improvement over Fame's Memorial which Oliver and Sargeaunt see in it.

The Golden Mean, Discoursing the Nobleness of Perfect Virtue in Extremes, in prose, was Ford's next work. The first edition of 1613 was published without the author's name on the title-page. A second edition appeared in 1614, but Ford again withheld his name.

The hint to Ford's authorship of this lengthy prose piece was also provided by Joseph Hunter. In the index to the third volume of Chorus Vatum, Hunter made this entry: "In a Catalogue of Kerslake of Bristol 1757 is The Golden Meane, Enlarged by the first author as it was formerly written to the Earl of Northumberland by John de la Ford--wnd Edit Jeff. Chorlton 1614--12<sup>mo</sup>. is this John Ford?"<sup>32</sup>

Again it was Miss Sargeaunt who acted upon Hunter's information. Once her investigation was underway, there was no problem in identifying the work as Ford's. In fact, Ford has as much as admitted his authorship: in the dedication of A Line of Life, he mentions "the golden meane, the exemplification whereof, however heretofore attributed, I dare not so poorly undervalue myself and labours, as not to call mine" (385).

The Golden Mean and A Line of Life are very similar-- in style and in content. Each shows Ford's interest in Stoicism,



each outlines a path of conduct for mortal men, each contains references to figures of ancient, recent, or contemporary history whose lives support the points presented in the text.

Reference to one of these historical figures provides support for assuming Ford's authorship of The Golden Mean. In A Line of Life Ford cites the Earl of Essex as an example of great men who were destroyed by flattery and envy (406). In Fame's Memorial Ford also spoke of envy as causing the downfall of Essex:

Renowned Devereux whose awkward fate  
Was misconceited by foul envy's hate...

(297)

And midway between those two works The Golden Mean also charges that other men's envy led to Essex's destruction; Ford speaks of "Robert, Earle of Essex, propt up in honours and cast down by envie."<sup>33</sup>

The final major point of similarity between the two prose tracts involves a summary at the end of The Golden Mean:

Wisdome informes the minde, and NOBLENESSE  
commends the actions; insomuch as every one who  
can act wisely, and deliberate Nobly, squaring  
his resolution to resolvee steaddinesse in both  
fortunes, may of merrit be inrolled amongst the  
memorable: and bee remembred by the desertfull  
to bee truely wise because Noble: to bee per-  
fectly Noble because wise.<sup>34</sup>

Ford thinks men "Noble because wise." In a dedicatory letter preceding A Line of Life Ford addresses that work to the "Wise and therein Noble" (383). To Miss Sargeaunt's evidence we may

add only that "resolution to resolvee steaddinesse" is the subject of A Line of Life.

The Golden Mean is a long philosophical effort, running through some 180 pages which explain how nobility should react to extremity. The original edition was dedicated simply "To a great Lord." As we have previously noted, the lord in question was Henry Percy, The Earl of Northumberland--a fact which was openly stated in the dedication to the second edition of 1614. At the time the work was first printed this nobleman was suffering from great adversity--he was then serving his seventh year of imprisonment for complicity in the Gunpowder Plot. The Golden Mean attempts to provide some consolation for nobility caught in adverse circumstances. The work teaches a stoical acceptance of fate, and throughout the long tract, it is in the stoical virtues that Ford sees the solution or salve to human ills.

Ford begins by propounding certain rules by which a man who desires to be virtuous should conduct his life. He argues that judgment is no more important to wisdom (a quality of mind) than moderation or the golden mean is to nobility (a quality of conduct). The strictest test of nobility is adversity, of which Ford distinguishes six types: disfavour, neglect, forfeiture of estate, banishment, imprisonment, and death.

Adversity may overtake a man without warning, and earthly blessings are subject to sudden change. To prove

this point Ford recalls figures from history: Pompey, Sejanus, and Ptolemy among the ancients, Cardinal Wolsey from the recent history of his own land, Lord Essex from the contemporary scene.<sup>35</sup>

The lives of such men as Essex manifest that temporal things such as wealth, honor, and authority fall rapidly away. But Ford finds that there is a remedy for all adversity. Nobility must triumph over adversity by adapting itself to the situation, by seeing in what ways adversity may prove profitable, and by making the best use of the difficulty. Such a course is possible. Ford reminds his readers that banishment did not cause Thomas Mowbray, the Duke of Norfolk, to abandon himself to despair; instead Mowbray won eternal commendation by fighting against the heathen enemies of his God in distant Palestine. Nor did banishment destroy the nobility of Henry Tudor, the Earl of Richmond--he returned from exile to overthrow the cruel Richard III and found a house of kings. Adversity, then, will be no obstacle to true nobility in Ford's opinion.

As previously stated, The Golden Mean is very similar--both in subject and in technique--to A Line of Life, which followed seven years later. Since that work is to be examined in great detail, there is no need to deal minutely with The Golden Mean.

In 1615 Ford produced a work entitled Sir Thomas Overbury's Ghost, Containing the History of his Life and Untimely

Death. This work was entered on the Stationer's Register on November 25, 1615; but it has been lost. For a long while this piece was presumed to be a play, but it was later pointed out that no play dealing with the Carr-Overbury affair could have reached the stage in 1615.<sup>36</sup> It is now generally assumed to have been a prose work. This is probably the correct assumption, but Sir Thomas Overbury's Ghost could have been a poem. Fame's Memorial is actually "The Life and Death of the Earl of Devonshire"--the full original title is Fame's Memoriall, or the Earle of Devonshire Deceased: With his honourable life, peacefull end, and sollemne Funerall."

Ford's poem to Overbury was doubtless written about the time of the lost Overbury's Ghost. The poem is signed merely "Jo Fo." (333), but there is no doubt that it is the work of the dramatist. We see again Ford's love of repetitive word-play:

He might have liv'd had not the life which gave  
Life to his life betray'd him to his grave.

(333)

As he did in Fame's Memorial, Ford plays with the name of his subject. He called Lord Mountjoy "the mounting joy of heaven's perfection" (291), and of Overbury he says: "Was never man that felt the sense of grief/So Overbury'd in a safe belief" (332). The most significant similarity between the poem and Ford's other work may be the line "If greatness

could consist in being good" (332). The positive assertion that greatness does consist of goodness is made over and over again in A Line of Life.

It is perhaps possible that there is yet another literary connection between Ford and Overbury. The first of the famed Characters of Sir Thomas Overbury appeared with the second edition of The Wife in 1614. The title-page states that the characters were written by Overbury "and other learned Gentlemen his friends." Twenty-two "characters" appeared in this volume. A recent editor of the Characters, Mr. W. J. Payton, assigned most of these sketches to Overbury; but he noted three groups--12-13, 15-17, 20-22--which he thought were not by Overbury. Professor Robert Davril has suggested that numbers 12 and 13 are by Ford. These two "characters" are "The Wise Man" and "The Noble Spirit." Davril points out that Ford stressed the relation between wisdom and nobility. He also notes a few faint similarities in thought and phrasing between these sketches and Fame's Memorial, The Golden Mean and A Line of Life.<sup>37</sup> The suggestion is interesting, but the evidence is too slight to be conclusive.

A Line of Life is the most important of Ford's non-dramatic works. Rarely has Ford's prose been so lucidly expressed. This lucidity came at a time when it was most desirable. Within another year Ford's career as a dramatist would definitely be underway. Thus, A Line of Life

stands at the center of Ford's literary work: it is a summary of the ideas expressed in the youthful verse and prose; it is a gloss for the plays which follow. On both accounts it is particularly valuable. It corrects mistaken interpretation of Honor Triumphant; it prevents misconstruction of the themes of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Love's Sacrifice. In the future no critic of Ford shall be able to pass authoritative judgments on these works without first having read, and read well, Linea Vitae, A Line of Life.

A Line of Life: Pointing out the Immortalitie of a Vertuous Name was published in 1620. It is thus a work of Ford's maturity--he is now thirty-four years of age. It is the first significant prose work that he has published in seven years, since The Golden Mean. But Ford's values and his ideals have not been lowered in the interim.

The work is dedicated to the "WISE, AND THEREIN NOBLE" (383). Ford is again concerned with wisdom and reason, and with their abuse: "in some men custom is so become another nature, that reason is not the mistress, but the servant, not the directress, but the foil to their passions. Folly is a saleable merchandise, whose factor, youth, is not so allowedly professed in young men as pleasure in men of any age:" (383). Therefore, A Line of Life is to present examples from the age "to the intent that by view of others' wounds we might provide plasters and cures for our own, if occasion impose them" (383). The dedication states the

idea that the work is intended to exemplify--"for to be truly good is to be great" (385).

The chief significance of this work lies in its comments on man and woman--Ford's views on the relationship of the sexes being the eternal problem in the criticism of most of his works. Ford demands that men face their duties as rational human beings:

...we were not born to traffic in follies, and to make merchandise of our sensualities;...we were not born to be panders to that great whore of a declining reason, bewitching pleasure....

What infinite enticers hath a man, as he is a mere man, to withdraw him from an erected heart! As the temptation of a reputed beauty...the lethargy and disease of an infectious court-grace; yet all and every one of these--with what other appendances soever belonging unto them--are, if not wisely made use of, but glorious snares, dangerous baits, golden poisons, dreaming destructions, snares to entrap the mightiness of constancy, baits to deceive the constancy of manhood, poisons to corrupt the manhood of resolution, destruction to quite cast away the resolution of a just desert.

(394-395)

Two pages later Ford returns to the same problem. As an example of masculine virtue Ford cites the Theban Epaminondas, who chose not "to give lust, dalliance, effeminate softness a regiment in the kingdom of his thoughts; no, not of his thoughts, much less of his actions" (398).

In the next section, that dealing with the public man, Ford comments again on the issue of sex. He calls flatterers the "patrons and minions of false pleasures," asserting that they often attempt to lead public men into

"the grossness, the ugliness, the deformity" of sensual follies, "with a false gloss varnishing and setting-out the paradise of uncontrolled pleasures, to the ruin ofttimes of the informed..." (403). Now, with A Line of Life in mind, can any critic ever again attempt to see Ford--whether in Honor Triumphant or in 'Tis Pity or in Love's Sacrifice--as "an amoral pagan" or an "unbridled individualist" in matters of love?

A Line of Life divides naturally into four sections. The first is merely an introduction which stresses the importance of resolution in the life of a man. The other three sections deal with what Ford considers to be the three branches of resolution.

Ford's aim is to persuade men to live well, to live with virtue. There is nothing new in his introductory argument. He states that a virtuous man has one great advantage over an unvirtuous one: the good man does not fear death, for to him death is but the separation of the body and the soul and the virtuous soul shall live forever. Thus, to the virtuous man the end of life is the greatest victory of all, the greatest reward of all. It is the end of the beginning, but the beginning of that which shall never end.

Ford outlines the process by which man may obtain the desired goals in life; he does so at length:

It is granted in philosophy that action is the crown of virtue. It cannot in reason--the light of philosophy--be denied that persever-



ance is the crown of action; and then divinity, the queen of nature, will confirm that sufferance is the crown of perseverance. For to be virtuous without the testimony of employment is as a rich mineral in the heart of the earth, unuseful because unknown; yet to be virtuously employed, and not to continue, is like a swift runner for a prize, who can with ease gain it from others, but slothfully sitteth down in the middle way: but to persevere in well-doing without a sense of a duty, only with hope of reward, is like an Indian dromedary, that gallops to his common inn, pricked onwards with the desire of provender. It is beast-like not to differ from beasts as well in the abuse of reason as it would be in the defect.

Action, perseverance in action, sufferance in perseverance, are the three golden links that furnish-up the richest chain wherewith a good man can be adorned.

(388)

"Action, perseverance in action, sufferance in perseverance"--this is the Line of Life. Ford summarizes all of this in the word "resolution." Having reached this point he outlines the sections to come:

And first it is to be observed, that resolution hath three branches. The one concerns a man's own particular person for the carriage of himself in his proper duty; and such an one is known by none other note than in being a man. Another concerns a man's employment in affairs for his country, prince, and commonwealth; and such a one is known by the general name of a public man. The last concerns a man's voluntary traffic in civil causes, without the imposition of authority, only urged to perform the offices of a friend, as a private statist to several ends, all tending to goodness and virtue; and such a one is ever to be called a good man. In every one of those there is a plentiful employment, presenting itself to the liberal choice for ennobling themselves with public honours, or gaining them the truest honour, a deserved fame, which is one,

if worthy, of the best and highest rewards of virtue his ideas on this matter have not changed since Fame's Memorial.

(391)

Ford then begins with his definition of a man. He repeats two common ideas of the age--that man is "distinguished from all other created substances in the only possession of a reasonable soul" (391-392) and that man "contains the summary of all the great world in the little world of himself" (392). Beyond this there is no need to go in search of a definition.

The passages which follow have already been considered at length in the section on Honor Triumphant. These are the passages dealing with the statements of Cicero, Aristotle, and Socrates concerning the relationship between the mind and the body. After proving the necessity for the superiority of the mind over the flesh, Ford continues by stating that the excellence of virtue is proved by the fact that even the most unvirtuous of men seek to clothe their actions under its veil--"hypocrisy is reputed the surest and safest ground of policy" (394). But a man must never try to delude himself. Man must face his duty as a man. He cannot abandon himself to vice or sloth. Sometimes, Ford admits, the battle to safeguard virtue is a lonely one. He points out that with the Greeks "by the very word many were the worst sort of people understood, and by few the best" (396). A man must persevere, even though he stands alone: "Epaminon-

das...chose rather to be moderate alone than mad with the multitude..." (397). This section concludes with the comparison of John Lord Harrington and Sir Walter Raleigh, which we have already noted.

This first section presents Ford's stoical tendencies. He demands "sufferance in perseverance" and moderation in all things. This section shows that Ford lies within the stoical tradition of the age.<sup>38</sup>

The second branch of resolution concerns the public man. The relation between the first and second branches is stressed: "bonus civis, a good statist" must be "bonus vir, good in himself" (400). Ford announces that his purpose is not to attempt what is beyond him, a detailed outline of what a statesman should be; he merely offers his work "to recreate the mind; not to inform knowledge in practice, but to conform practice to knowledge" (400). Then he gives the results of his "impartial observation" (401).

Two kinds of public men are differentiated: those raised by their prince's favour--"which favour cannot ordinarily be conferred without some main and evident note of desert" (401)--and those whose education and training have prepared them for certain positions in the commonwealth. He recognizes that the office of a public man is always full of dangers. Against the public men he opposes two chief types of enemies, "flatterers and privy murderers" (401)--the flattery and envy of bad men are everpresent threats

to a virtuous officer. Ford is not sure which is worse-- in fact, he finds that they are often inseparable.

He cites St. Augustine--"non est mihi vicinior hostis memet ipso" (402)--as proof that the flesh is heir to many weaknesses. Flatterers act upon a man's natural vanity and lead him to excesses. Then the envious, always vigilant where the faults of others are concerned, pounce and destroy-- "Great men are by great men--not good men by good men-- narrowly sifted; their lives, their actions, their demeanours examined, for that their places and honours are hunted after as the bezoar for his preservatives; and then the least blemish, the least slide, the least error, the least offence is exasperated, made capital:" (405). The result is often fatal. Thus, to Ford, flattery is "an inmate to envy,...the one being caterer to the other's bloody banquet: and some wise men have been persuaded that the pestilence, the rigour of law, famine, sickness, or war, have not devoured more great ones than flattery and envy" (405).

Ford then gives three recent examples of public men whom flattery and envy overthrew--Charles, Duke of Byron, in France; Sir John Vanolden Barneveldt in Holland; and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex in England. Essex, "too confident of the love he held,...felt the misery of greatness, by relying on such as flattered and envied his greatness" (406). Essex is proof, says Ford, that a public man cannot live in happiness unless "he preserves his happiness

with a resolution that depends upon the guard of innocency and goodness" (406). Bonus civis must be bonus vir.

The last branch of resolution shows the qualities of a good man, one who acts for the good of others. Ford praises the good man highly. Such a man never flatters or envies, he gives freely of himself to others, he encourages learning and justice. Ford continues at some length in this fashion, enumerating the virtues of a good man. Then he makes a rather sudden transition to talk of kings.

Kings, he notes, are generally considered public men, but he makes a qualification of this--when a king participates in the affairs of other princes, "not immediately concerning his own particular, or his people's, but for moderating the differences between other princes; in this respect even kings are private men, and so their actions belong wholly and only to themselves..." (413). This brings Ford to James and James's grandfather, who was called "the poor man's king" (414). He comments that "the riches of many kingdoms are of too low and mean a value to purchase the dignity and honour of this only style, the poor man's king" (414).

Ford proceeds then to James, whom he praises as a peacemaker, a moderator of the differences between his fellow European princes. Nor does his praise end there. Ford has always been effusive and much given to exaggeration, and he lauds James lavishly, too lavishly. Can Ford

really be completely serious when he calls James Stuart "a good man that loves not virtue for the name of virtue only, but for the substance and realities; a good man, whom neither scandal can any way impeach of injustice, tyranny, ignorance, nor imposture traduce to a neglect of merit in the desertful, to levity in affections, to surquedry in passions, to intention of inclining to folly, or declining from real worth..." (415). Ford then writes his hope that history will remember the king not as James the Great, which would be an injustice, but as James the Good. Considering what we have seen of James, it seems unlikely that all of this can be taken at face value. Ford does admit here that the king is inferior only to God--but that is orthodox Tudor theory; it is not a defense of the divine right of kings as such. When Ford calls James the vicegerent [sic] of God, he moves closer to the Stuart idea. But in one earlier section--the part dealing with public men, which Ford has said kings also are--he has declared, "No man can be or should be reputed a god" (402). That must be Ford's opinion concerning the extreme Stuart doctrine.

In the brief Corollary which concludes A Line of Life, he implies that the work was written primarily for the public man, and we may recall that "Kings and mighty monarchs...within their proper dominions are indeed public persons" (413). He says again that "A good man is the man

that even the greatest or lowest should both be, and resolve to be..." (418). I wonder whether the praise of James in the last section should be taken literally. It seems possible to me that in A Line of Life Ford is attempting to show what kind of man James should become rather than to show the kind of man he actually believes his king to be.

Why else was he so determined in the dedication to deny specific applications in the work (the italics are mine)?

It is an easy vanity, in these days of liberty, to be a conceited interpreter, but a difficult commendation to be a serious author; for whatsoever is at all times honestly intended, oftentimes is too largely construed. General collections meet--not seldom--with particular applications, and those so dangerous, that it is more safe, more wise, to profess a free silence than a necessary industry.

Here in this--scarce an--handful of discourse, is deciphered, not what any personally is, but what any personally may be....

(383)

The last sentence is very strange if Ford is planning to devote most of one entire section to enumerating the virtues of James. What "particular applications" could there be in a work of this nature that would cause him to write as he did in the introduction? He mentions several men by name in the work; but only one of them, James Stuart, was alive in 1620. If we may believe that Ford's praise of James is not sincere, then the distance between A Line of Life in 1620 and the criticism of the divine right theory in Perkin Warbeck in 1634 is but a step.

With A Line of Life Ford's career as a prose writer seems to have closed. After 1620 he devoted his efforts to the stage with the exception of a few slight occasional poems. He has a commendatory poem in Henry Cockram's The English Dictionary (1623), for which John Webster wrote verses.<sup>39</sup> And Ford also wrote lines for Webster's The Duchess of Malfi in 1623; Ford praises Webster highly:

Crowne him a poet, whom nor Rome nor Greece  
Transcend in all their's, for a master-piece:  
In which, while words and matter change, and men  
Act one another, hee, from whose cleare pen  
They all tooke life, to memory hath lent  
A lasting fame to raise his monument.<sup>40</sup>

Ford wrote commendatory verses for at least three other contemporary dramatists. He has poems for James Shirley's The Wedding (1629), for Richard Brome's The Northern Lasse (1632), and for two plays by Philip Massinger, The Roman Actor (1629) and The Great Duke of Florence (1636). The poem to Shirley is particularly good:

The bonds are equal and the marriage fit,  
Where judgment is the bride, the husband wit.  
Wit hath begot, and judgment hath brought forth,  
A noble issue of delight and worth,  
Grown in this comedy to such a strength  
Of sweet perfection as that not the length  
Of days, nor rage of malice, can have force  
To sue a nullity, or work divorce  
Between this well-trimm'd Wedding and loud fame,  
Which shall in every age renew thy name.

(334)

This is a graceful little poem.

Professor Davril, referring to C. E. Andrew's Richard Brome, A Study of His Life and Work, suggests that the lines



for The Northern Lass may have been written by the John Ford of Gray's Inn. However, he also points out that the character of Constance in Brome's play would have pleased the John Ford of the Middle Temple.<sup>41</sup> It is generally accepted that the author of this poem was the dramatist.

The two poems to Massinger contain similar references to literary hacks. In the earliest Ford complains that

To write is grown so common in our time,  
That every one who can but frame a rhyme,  
However monstrous gives himself that praise  
Which only he should claim that may wear bays<sup>42</sup>

In the later poem Ford says

Let many write, let much be printed, read  
And censur'd; toys no sooner hatch'd than dead.  
Here, without blush to truth of commendation,  
Is proved, how art hath outgone imitation.<sup>43</sup>

If certain seventeenth-century works are given full credit for truthfulness, there was some rivalry or quarrel between Ford and Ben Jonson. However, Ford contributed a poem to Jonsonus Virbius (1638), a collection of poems which Jonson's friends made in memory of Ben. Ford's offering is entitled "On the Best of English Poets, Ben Jonson, Deceased." In this piece Ford shows nothing but admiration and respect for the dead poet:

He--in his truth of art, and that in him--  
Lives yet, and will while letters can be read:  
The loss is ours....

(330)

The court, the university, the heat  
Of theatres, with what can else beget

Belief and admiration, clearly prove  
Our poet first in merit as in love.

(330)

...he, whose pen in every strain did use  
To drop a verse, and every verse a Muse,  
Is vow'd to heaven....

(330)

The year 1638 marks Ford's disappearance from London. It also marks the end of Ford's literary work unless the two poems discussed in the opening chapter of this study are by him. The poem in Edmund Elys's Dia Poemata consists of only eight lines, and it contains nothing that is strikingly suggestive of either Ford's thought or style. "A Contract of Love and Truth"<sup>44</sup> does show some of the characteristics of Ford's thought and style. The passage "when to be great is to be Good" suggests a line in the poem to Overbury and the message of A Line of Life. It will be remembered that the occasion for this poem was a wedding, and the poem has some faint similarities with Ford's lines on Shirley's play The Wedding. In the poem to Shirley, Ford writes "Where judgment is the bride, the husband wit" (334), and this line is recalled when we read the final line of the later poem, "Wise Love is here the Husband, Trueth the Wife." In the earlier poem Ford celebrates the union of The Wedding and "loud Fame" (334), and in "A Contract" he says that worth is "Louder in sound then Fame can set it forth." I think that "A Contract of Love and Truth" is very probably the work of John Ford.

The body of Ford's non-dramatic writings is rather large, and these early works are interesting and valuable addenda to his eight independent plays and several collaborations. As a whole the non-dramatic works have been slighted by critics, a fact which has caused considerable injustice to the writer, for some of the works do have intrinsic merit and almost all provide insights into the mind and literary consciousness of the man who wrote them. Although there are large gaps between the dates of his publications (from 1606 to 1613 there is nothing and from 1613 to 1620 little that bears his name), the works which are still extant show a consistency in his thought and in his values which is of great importance to any analyst of the plays. The non-dramatic works are a valuable record of the mind and character of their author.

At least five of these early works--two in verse, three in prose--stand out significantly. Fame's Memorial is no disgrace to a youth of twenty entering for the first time the realms of gold, and the poem deserves something more than the occasional paragraph granted it by kinder critics. Christ's Bloody Sweat, if indeed it is by Ford (and were it not for the stylistic parallels, I should doubt that it is), may show some slight improvement over the earlier poem in that it is more varied in thought and structure; but it does not, I think, represent a great degree of improvement, and I cannot see that it gives any indication whatsoever that

the same poet who wrote it would be able to write The Broken Heart or The Lover's Melancholy, or The Witch of Edmonton. The religiosity of the poem makes it the most unusual part of the writer's canon.

Honor Triumphant is a serio-comic exercise, perhaps in the euphuistic tradition of the age. It is Ford's only youthful excursion into humor--thankfully so, since his reputation has paid a fearful price for the fun of writing it. The mere bulk of The Golden Mean allows it to loom large among the author's works. It is interesting chiefly for the evidence it gives of Ford's belief in the principles of Renaissance Stoicism, for the implications of its connection with A Line of Life. This last work is the most interesting of Ford's early writings. A Line of Life is logically and carefully organized, and it is clearly expressed--except in the parts dealing with James, where we may choose to believe that Ford was intentionally vague.

All of these five works show the consistency of Ford's thoughts. He was always desirous of peace. He commended Mountjoy for unifying Ireland, applauded the concord of England and Denmark, lauded James for his honorable record as a maker and keeper of peace. Where earthly love was concerned Ford's beliefs never changed: at no time did he succumb to the charms of free love. In 1606 he praised Mountjoy for leaving the sensual pleasures of the court; in 1613 he stated that love was not a god, and in 1620 he demanded that man not betray his reason to the flesh.

Even the various minor works are of some importance for the hints they provide of Ford's friendships and interests. The Middle Temple was no cloistered monastery, and certainly the man who knew Dekker, Jonson, Shirley, Middleton, Rowley, and Overbury was not a melancholic introvert. Ford was, I should suspect, a well-rounded man of the Renaissance, with varied interests, varied friendships, varied lives. From the Temple to the stage was his progression. The non-dramatic works from 1606 to 1620 provide a valuable record of the Temple period. A few of the other great dramatists of the English Renaissance have also left us a large body of non-dramatic writings; but none, I think, has left so significant a record of his values and ideals as has John Ford of the Middle Temple.

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup>Unless otherwise noted all citations from the non-dramatic works of John Ford are from The Works of John Ford, ed. William Gifford, with additions by Reverend Alexander Dyce (London, 1895), III. The notes in the text refer to the page number or numbers of the third volume of this edition, which is hereafter referred to as Gifford-Dyce. Fame's Memorial is generally considered Ford's earliest work; but Mark Eccles has stated, without providing reasons for the statement, that the poem to Barnes was Ford's first publication. See Mark Eccles, "Barnabe Barnes" in Thomas Lodge and Other Elizabethans, ed. Charles J. Sisson (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1933), p. 231.

<sup>2</sup>Gifford-Dyce, III, 284. James Nardin and Annette McCormick believe that Ford intentionally spelled out "COITUI" in the final four lines of the acrostic. However, to accept this is to make Ford a man of no taste or sensitivity--and this does not seem the case. The acrostic is addressed to a countess and precedes an elegy to her husband, who had but recently died.

<sup>3</sup>Cyril Falls, Mountjoy: Elizabethan General (London, 1955), pp. 223-224.

<sup>4</sup>The editors have failed to place the needed accent over the "e" in "buried."

<sup>5</sup>A. W. Ward, A History of English Dramatic Literature (New York, 1899), III, 72.

<sup>6</sup>Emile Legouis and Louis Cazamian, A History of English Literature (New York, 1930), p. 506.

<sup>7</sup>G. F. Sensabaugh, The Tragic Muse of John Ford (Stanford, 1944), p. 167.

<sup>8</sup>'Tis Pity She's a Whore and The Broken Heart, ed. Stuart Pratt Sherman (Boston, 1915), p. xiv.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. xii.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. xi.

<sup>11</sup>John Heneage Jesse, Memoirs of the Court of James (Boston, n. d.), I, 74-75.

<sup>12</sup>M. Joan Sargeaunt, "Writings Ascribed to John Ford by Joseph Hunter in Chorus Vatum," Review of English Studies, X (April, 1934), 165.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 173-174.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Clifford Leech, John Ford and the Drama of His Time (London, 1957), p. 22.

<sup>17</sup>Sargeaunt, pp. 168-169.

<sup>18</sup>Sherman, p. 129. See The Works of Thomas Nashe, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow (London, 1910), I, 218.

<sup>19</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 172.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 172-173.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 173.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>23</sup>M. Joan Sargeaunt, John Ford (London, 1935), p. 11.

<sup>24</sup>H. J. C. Oliver, The Problem of John Ford (Carlton, Victoria, 1955), p. 14.

<sup>25</sup>Leech, p. 23.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 23-24.

<sup>29</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 10.

<sup>30</sup>Leech, p. 23.

<sup>31</sup>Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 11.

<sup>32</sup>Sargeaunt, Chorus Vatum, p. 176.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>35</sup>Oliver, pp. 14-15; Sargeaunt, John Ford, p. 12.

<sup>36</sup>This important point was first made, I believe, by A. H. Bullen.

<sup>37</sup>Robert Davril, Le Drame de John Ford (Paris, 1954), pp. 92-96.

<sup>38</sup>Leech, p. 24; Oliver, p. 15.

<sup>39</sup>Davril, p. 67.

<sup>40</sup>The White Devil and The Duchess of Malfy, ed. Martin W. Sampson (Boston, 1904), p. 215.

<sup>41</sup>Davril, pp. 54-55.

<sup>42</sup>The Plays of Philip Massinger, ed. William Gifford (New York, 1860), p. xxxix.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>The citations from this poem are taken from Bertram Lloyd, "An Unprinted Poem by John Ford," Review of English Studies, I (April, 1925), 217-218.



## CHAPTER IV

### FORD AND THE DRAMA WRITTEN IN COLLABORATION

In 1621 a tragedy entitled The Witch of Edmonton appeared on the stage of the Cockpit in Drury Lane. This is the first dramatic work with which the name of John Ford may definitely be associated. The theatre proved congenial to Ford: to it he gave most, if not all, of the remaining years of his life.

The Witch of Edmonton is the result of a collaboration between Ford, evidently a neophyte as far as the drama is concerned, and two well-seasoned veterans of stage writing, Thomas Dekker and Samuel Rowley. In the next few years Ford shared in the composition of several plays. He may have worked with Rowley again in the Spanish Gypsy. He certainly collaborated with Dekker in The Sun's Darling, The Welsh Ambassador, Keep the Widow Waking, and several other plays. Ford probably worked also with most of the other leading playwrights still active at the time--with all but Ben Johnson, in fact. He was associated with Thomas Middleton in The Spanish Gypsy, with Philip Massinger and John Webster in The Fair Maid of the Inn, and perhaps with John Fletcher in this last-named play and The Laws of Candy.

There is a possibility that Ford's career as a dramatist began some years before the date of The Witch of Edmonton--in

1612, to be exact. A play entitled A Bad Beginning Makes a Good End was part of the entertainments at court in the season of 1612-1613, and F. G. Fleay has suggested that this is the same play as An Ill Beginning Has a Good End, and a Bad Beginning May Have a Good End, which is attributed to Ford in an entry in The Stationer's Register for June 29, 1660.<sup>1</sup>

However, the idea that Ford was the author of A Bad Beginning has met with serious objections--most of them raised by Thomas Marc Parrott, whose comments on the problem must be taken into consideration.

The play in question was one of four--the others being Beauty in a Trance, The Royal Combat, and the London Merchant--which were attributed to Ford in entries made at the Stationer's by Humphrey Moseley, whose judgment (or honesty) in such matters is most questionable, since in 1653 he registered The Merry Devil of Edmonton as being "by Wm. Shakespeare" and in 1660, as a precedent to publication, registered such plays as The History of King Stephen, Duke Humphrey, a Tragedy, and Iphis and Ianthé as the work of "Will. Shakespeare." Certainly in this case Moseley was merely trying to take advantage of a familiar name, and equally questionable motives may have prompted the attribution of four unknown plays to Ford.

An Ill Beginning was mentioned, under a slightly altered title, by John Warburton, who said that A Good Beginning May Have a Good End was one of the plays burned by his infamous servant, Betty Baker. Of course, W. W. Greg has long since

cast doubt on Warburton's integrity by pointing out the great similarity between the plays entered on the Register by Moseley and those Warburton claimed were accidentally cremated. In this connection it is noteworthy that three of the titles listed by Warburton are Beauty in a Trance, The Royal Combat, and The London Merchant. If Betty Baker actually baked as many pies as her master claimed, then she toasted a large fraction of the canon of Ford. However, Parrott concludes that the evidence of Moseley and Warburton for Ford's authorship of An Ill Beginning is very questionable, and indeed it is.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, theirs is the only evidence which associates the Devonshire dramatist with the play.

The only contemporary mention of A Bad Beginning is in an entry in the account books of the Treasurer of the Chamber, which records the payment made to John Hemmings for the performance of six plays at court by his company, the King's men, in the season of 1612-1613. The assumption that the play Moseley called An Ill Beginning in 1660 is the same as A Bad Beginning of 1612 is a logical one--especially when we consider the Treasurer's general failure to record the exact names of plays--but it is not necessarily correct. However, even if we should doubt that the two titles refer to the same work, serious objections to Ford's authorship of the play of 1612 have to be considered.

The Treasurer listed the six plays performed by the King's company. The list starts with A Bad Beginning and

includes The Captain by Beaumont and Fletcher, The Alchemist by Jonson, The Hotspur (I Henry IV) and Benedicte and Betteris (Much Ado About Nothing) by Shakespeare, and Cardenno (Cardenio), now lost but believed to have been by Shakespeare and Fletcher.<sup>3</sup> As Parrott points out, the King's company was showing the court its best plays and its best writers. It is not likely that a writer as young and inexperienced as Ford could have written a drama excellent enough to be performed before the court. Ford was in very good company if a work of his was being produced by the King's men that season, for Shakespeare, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher were at the height of their powers.<sup>4</sup>

The assumption that the play noted in the Chamber books was Ford's creates some difficult biographical problems. Ford is not again connected with the King's men until 1628, when The Lover's Melancholy was acted by that company at the court. If Ford had been an associate in good standing with the company in 1612, then it seems unlikely that he would have done no other work with them for sixteen years. Or, even if he broke with that company, he would probably not have stayed away from the stage for nine years. Nor, says Parrott, would he have then returned only in collaboration with the penniless Dekker, "an incompetent and unsuccessful author."<sup>5</sup> Although Parrott is being grossly unfair to Dekker--whom, incidentally, he called "gifted" a page earlier--and although his argument involves much guesswork, not all of which can be accepted, it

must be admitted that his main point is probably correct. It seems most unlikely that A Bad Beginning is the work of John Ford.

The chief opposition to the critical line of argument best exemplified by Parrott is provided by E. H. C. Oliphant, who terms the idea that Ford's first work for the stage was The Witch of Edmonton an "irrational view." He points out that Ford was precocious--an accurate observation, as Fame's Memorial and the other works of his twentieth year witness. Therefore, Oliphant thinks it unlikely that Ford delayed his career as a dramatist until he was well above thirty, and he assumes that Ford was the author of A Bad Beginning in 1612. The historian concludes his argument thus:

Is it not much more reasonable to assume that Ford was writing for the stage in that year 1612? As to what he did between then and 1621, he is far from being the only dramatist of whose doings during those years we are ignorant. It is not a period illuminated for us by contemporary documents.

But there is yet other proof that Ford was writing long before 1621; his plays, as Mr. F. E. Pierce pointed out some years ago, fall into two very marked classes, with widely differing metrical characteristics. The one group is obviously much later than the other, and it is worthy of note that "The Witch of Edmonton," which dates 1621, belongs to the later group. The inference is that the two plays belonging to the other group date long prior to that year.<sup>6</sup>

The difficulty with this argument is that those two plays which Oliphant makes so much of are Love's Sacrifice and 'Tis Pity She's a Whore,<sup>7</sup> both published in 1633. These tragedies contain much of Ford's finest work, and it is

difficult to assign them to a date "long prior" to 1621. Furthermore, the fact that Ford was precocious does not necessarily mean that he was precocious in drama.

There is always the possibility that Ford revised A Bad Beginning and thereby provided sufficient grounds for Moseley's attribution. But there is no evidence for this, and Oliphant attacks this theory also. At the moment it seems best to say merely that John Ford had no part in the original composition of a play acted in 1612-1613 under the title of A Bad Beginning Makes a Good Ending.

Therefore, a discussion of Ford's dramatic works must start with The Witch of Edmonton and the beginnings of his partnership with Dekker in 1621. I am not so inclined as Parrott to disparage Dekker, for he was in many ways a fine poet and a fine playwright. Ford and the humane older dramatist had a good many ideas in common: their independent literary efforts in both the drama and in certain prose pamphlets is proof of that. Certainly their relationship must have been congenial to both, for between 1621 and 1625 the two poets collaborated in the writing of at least six plays and perhaps more. Two of these--The Fairy Knight and The Bristow Merchant, licensed by Sir Henry Herbert on June 11 and October 22 of 1624--are lost, and no additional facts are known about them. Keep the Widow Waking, licensed by Herbert in September 1624, is also lost, but considerable information concerning this strange play has been discovered. Dekker's

hand has been suspected in two other plays written by Ford, The Spanish Gypsy and Perkin Warbeck, but the case for Dekker here is very slight. Still extant are two noteworthy plays, The Witch of Edmonton and The Sun's Darling, and one inadequate effort, The Welsh Ambassador, in which Ford and Dekker were obviously collaborators.

Dekker, a man of long experience in writing for the stage, must have exerted much influence on Ford, who had done, it seems, little work in poetry of any kind and evidently none with verse drama. Dekker's poetic genius has considerable merit: certainly the creator of Old Fortunatus, The Shoemaker's Holiday, and The Honest Whore was a poet of talent. But Dekker was a poor man. Writing was to him a necessity, a way of making a living, and much of his writing is mere hack-work. To finish a play quickly was advantageous to him. Dekker was not inclined, therefore, to worry very long about occasional roughness in his verse or incongruities and improbabilities in his plots. In his inattention to the niceties of plot structure he perhaps had an unfortunate influence on Ford. But he was not the worst possible partner for a newcomer to the art of the stage. His own metrical faults never misled Ford into similar carelessness. And Dekker was a man of some wit and considerable imagination, both faculties evidently being needed by Ford, for they had not been conspicuous in his non-dramatic works. Their long association indicates that Ford, a university man and a gentleman, found some satisfaction in

his collaboration with the penniless and careless, but kind and intelligent old poet, Thomas Dekker.

The problem which continually confronts analysts and critics of the Ford-Dekker canon is a division of the plays. The difficulty is often complicated by the possibility that other writers are involved--Rowley, for instance, in The Witch of Edmonton. The problem is worse in connection with a play Ford worked on after the years of his partnership with his teacher: Dekker's hand is not evident in The Fair Maid of the Inn, but various critics have suggested that the hands of Webster, Massinger, Rowley, Fletcher, and Beaumont are. Clearly the task of dividing the lines of a play written in collaboration is a difficult one at best.

However, it is not impossible. With two such different poets as Ford and Dekker the quality or tone of the verse or the character of the subject treated sometimes gives sufficient evidence of its author, or at least the reader's instinct leads him to think that it does. Nor can the responses of an intelligent and trained reader be disregarded--Lord Tennyson's dictum that Shakespeare was involved in the writing of Pericles is a case in point.

It seems that most of the Victorian and Georgian analysts of the Ford-Dekker canon made their divisions of the plays by purely impressionistic means. Some later critics have employed less subjective methods, such as the accumulation of lists of parallels. Dekker, Ford, and most of their contemporaries in



the drama repeated certain phrases, images, ideas, or dialectal peculiarities from one play to the next. The discovery of passages in works of multiple authorship which have parallels in an author's known work is certainly suggestive evidence of an author's hand, and Stuart Sherman, F. E. Pierce, and H. D. Sykes have done invaluable work in this regard on the Ford-Dekker material. But lists of parallels, though certainly suggestive, are not necessarily conclusive evidence: and this system is perhaps overvalued by some, particularly since we are dealing with poets who freely imitated and borrowed from each other and who often may have been influenced by others writing on the same play in the same room with them.

Therefore, even though parallel passages must be granted to be good evidence, they should be used with caution, for they can be misleading. For instance, is Frank Thorney's speech in The Witch of Edmonton on the voyage of man through life to death,

...when a man has been an hundred years  
 Hard travelling o'er the tottering bridge of age,  
 He's not the thousand part upon his way:  
 All life is but a wandering to find home;  
 When we are gone; we're there. Happy were man,  
 Could here his voyage end; he should not, then,  
 Answer how well or ill he steer'd his soul  
 By heaven's or by hell's compass; how he put in--  
 Losing bless'd goodness' shore--at such a sin;  
 Nor how life's dear provision he has spent,  
 Nor how far he in's navigation went  
 Beyond commission: this were a fine reign,  
 To do ill and not hear of it again;  
 Yet then were man more wretched than a beast;  
 For, sister, our dead pay is sure the best  
 (IV, ii, 248-249)

a parallel with Dekker or with Ford? Dekker has written

I have gone  
But half the bridge /of life/ o'er yet;  
There lies before me  
As much as I have passed and I'll go it all<sup>8</sup>

and

If he cashier Pierce Penniless with dead pay.<sup>9</sup>

Ford has several passages similar to the one in The Witch:

...in this ship of our mortality, howsoever  
we limit our courses, or are suited  
in any fortune of prosperity or lowness  
in this great sea of the world, yet by  
the violence and perpetual motion of time  
are we compelled to pace onward to  
the last and long home of our graves...

(LL: 388)

O, lady, in the turmoils of our lives,  
Men are like politic states, or troubled seas,  
Toss'd up and down with several storms and tempests,  
Change and variety of wrecks and fortunes;  
Till, labouring to the havens of our homes,  
We struggle for the calm that crowns our ends.

(LM: V. i. 88)

Pierce attributes the passage to Dekker, dismissing the other poet with the statement that only "Vague parallels to this common voyage of life figure are found in Ford" and concluding that IV.2. showed no parallels with Ford's work.<sup>10</sup> He states that Dekker had other parallels much closer to this passage than any of Ford's, and cites The Whore of Babylon in particular. His reference must be to this passage:

We stept not forth  
But with a god-like adoration  
All knees bowed low unto us: why was this?  
.....  
It was because (wise Pylots) we from rockes,  
And gulfes infernall, safely set on shore

Mens soules at yonder haven: or (beeing shipwrackt)  
 Strong lines forth cast we, suffering none to sinke  
 To that Abisse, which some hold bottomlesse<sup>11</sup>

which is no parallel at all to the part of the passage he quoted from The Witch.

Sykes has most definitely proved that the parallels in Ford's independent works were not vague. He does not mention any of Dekker's parallels in connection with Frank's speech, but he does state that Dekker's hand is evident in the scene.<sup>12</sup> By the same process of accumulating parallel passages two competent critics reach opposite conclusions: Pierce gives the scene entirely to Dekker; Sykes gives it primarily to Ford but notes Dekker's presence.

Other methods of determining shares in divided plays have their limitations, too. The fondness of an author for certain quite common words may lead to so frequent a repetition of them that their appearance in collaborations becomes suggestive of the poet's authorship of passages in which they appear. Obviously, mere word counts must be used cautiously, but in connection with Ford they can be valuable, as Sykes has proved.

Professor Pierce devised another word test, involving a tabulation of the number of times words of three or more syllables of Greek or Latin origin are used in the independent plays of Ford and Dekker. With the exception of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore the difference is very marked. This test may have some value, but its application to a play such as The

Witch of Edmonton produced negligible results and its usefulness for any collaborative play is perhaps highly questionable.

Certain metrical tests may be of value. Pierce has figured the percentage of frequency with which such elements as rime, run-on lines, and feminine endings appear in the separate scenes of The Sun's Darling and The Witch of Edmonton. By comparing these figures with those for the independent work of the dramatists he has reached conclusions which seem to support other methods of analysis. It is in this way, as support for stronger evidence, that such statistical studies are chiefly useful--by themselves they prove little or nothing. Pierce's work has added to the processes available to other analysts of Ford's collaborations. Both F. L. Lucas and E. H. C. Oliphant have made good use of his methods.

In our discussion of the early plays of Ford all of the analytical methods which have been mentioned will be referred to in more detail in our attempt to determine the poet's share in these works. Unfortunately, Dekker must be slighted in this study, for our primary purpose is to recognize the extent and quality of Ford's earliest efforts in the drama.

#### THE WITCH OF EDMONTON

The earliest play by Ford which is still extant is probably The Witch of Edmonton, the highly successful result of his collaboration with Thomas Dekker and Samuel Rowley.

This fine tragedy was not published until 1658; but it must have been written in 1621, shortly after the appearance of Henry Goodcole's prose tract The Wonderfull Discoverie of Elizabeth Sawyer A Witch Late of Edmonton (1621), which contained the details of Mother Sawyer's execution for witchcraft. The title-page of the first edition states that the play had been "Acted by the Princes Servants, often at the Cock-Pit in Drury-Lane, once at Court, with singular Applause." The Witch was one of the few plays by Ford that were revived by later decades. It deserves its popularity.

For many of the details concerning Elizabeth Sawyer, the witch of Edmonton, the dramatists followed Goodcole's work rather closely.<sup>13</sup> The result of the combination of Goodcole's first-hand narrative and the poetic power of Ford and his fellows is a stark, realistic drama. This remarkable study of witchcraft has its faults, but nonetheless it is a strikingly powerful example of domestic tragedy. Charles Swinburne called it "perhaps the first protest of the stage against the horrors and brutalities of vulgar superstition."<sup>14</sup> It is just this essential humanity which is the most immediately impressive aspect of this generally impressive drama. The playwrights permit no doubt that the old, lonely, ugly crone, Mother Sawyer, is a witch: they distinctly show her calling upon the demons of hell and drawing a covenant with them. But Mother Sawyer is not held fully accountable for her moral defection: the playwrights show that the aged woman

has received much abuse, both mental and physical, from the good people of Edmonton; and they indicate that it is these injustices which have driven her to become a pawn of hell. In their demonstration of the manner in which the old and unloved elements of society were transformed into witches, Ford and his co-workers created one of the most powerful dramatic moments in the entire half-century of England's finest dramatic age.

Aesthetically, the play also has many excellent passages. Frank Thorney's opening speech to Winifred, the woman he has just married, reveals a great deal in a few words:

Come, wench; why, here's a business soon dispatch'd:  
Thy heart I know is now at ease; thou need'st not  
Fear what the tattling gossips in their cups  
Can speak against thy fame; thy child shall know  
Whom to call dad now.

(1.1.177)

In less than five lines the poet makes the facts of Thorney's illicit affair perfectly clear, and in those facts and the flippant tone of his remarks to his wife gives an indication of his character which later scenes will prove to be the true quality of the man.

The excellence of the poetry and of the exposition of situation and character in this speech continues through the opening sections of the play. The first scene is fully admirable; William Gifford was highly pleased with it: "this must be termed a beautiful scene, and a very happy opening of the plot and some of the chief characters."<sup>15</sup> Swinburne's

criticism of the entire first act is full of praise: "There is no more admirable exposition of a play on the English stage; the perfect skill and the straightforward power with which the plan of the story is opened and the interest of the reader fixed are made the more evident by the direct simplicity of method and means used."<sup>16</sup>

Only in the comic scenes dealing with Cuddy Banks and the clowns does this drama fall occasionally from its high level of excellence. But even here the faults are few; and these episodes do make a contribution to the play, for there is genuine humor at times in Cuddy's situation and a degree of unity between the plots involving Cuddy and the witch.

Therefore, the task of dividing The Witch of Edmonton among its various authors is the unusually pleasant one of distributing honors for jobs well done. The title-page of the play informs the reader that it was written "By divers well-esteemed Poets; William Rowley, Thomas Dekker, John Ford, &c." In attempting to apportion The Witch, criticism has for the most part ignored the "&c." and concentrated on the three dramatists mentioned. One is thankful for that, for the mere mention of those three names has provided sufficient grounds for volumes of disagreement.

The difference in critical opinion is evident in the verdicts of nineteenth and early twentieth century analysts who attempted to identify the poet chiefly responsible for the conception and guidance of the play: Fleay thought Dekker's

the controlling hand; Ernest Rhys gave the credit to Rowley; Sykes and MacNeile Dixon believed the main structure to be Ford's; Mary L. Hunt held Dekker and Ford jointly responsible for the design of the work.

Nor could the critics agree about the identity of the poets responsible for the development of the major characters, Fleay and Dixon credited Dekker with creating the Witch, but Rhys suggested that Ford aided Dekker in drawing her portrait and Bullen thought she was the work of Rowley. W. A. Neilson gave Frank Thorney's part to Ford, but Swinburne and F. E. Pierce assigned some of the youth's lines to Dekker. If we were to attempt to guess which of the characters Ford worked on, we would perhaps think first of the women who suffer for love, the romantic heroines Susan and Winifred. But even here there is considerable dissent. Ward did think that Ford drew Susan, but Swinburne gave Susan to Dekker primarily--so did Rhys and Dixon. Bullen credited Dekker with both of "the beautiful characters of Winifred and Susan."

As would be expected, an equally large--if not far larger--amount of confusion has surrounded efforts to apportion the various scenes and acts of the play to its several authors. One extreme was represented by Gifford, who was willing to dismiss Rowley almost entirely. Ward felt that all three dramatists had substantial shares in the work. The extreme opposite of Gifford may best be personified by Bullen and George Saintsbury, both of whom divided most of The Witch



between Dekker and Rowley and assumed that Ford's share was very slight, Saintsbury seeing Ford chiefly in the tragedy's "comparative regularity and the quite unreasonable and unintelligible bloodiness of the murder of Susan." The one point in which all the earlier analysts concurred was that whatever the precise shares may have been, Dekker's portion was substantial.<sup>17</sup>

The concensus of Victorian opinion granted Ford almost all the first act and a significant portion of the final scene. But Ford was not popular in the Victorian era, and there were no really significant analytical studies of his work. Later critics, dealing more closely with minute textual matters have seen fit to enlarge Ford's share. H. J. C. Oliver remains rather conservative: he thinks Ford's hand is probably evident in several scenes, but he assigns only three definitely to the poet.<sup>18</sup> Sargeaunt believes that Ford worked with Dekker on the scenes in which Carter and his two daughters appear (as Fleay had suggested).<sup>19</sup> Sykes has claimed far more than this for the novitiate: "The greater part is certainly Ford's. To him belongs the main structure of the drama, with the characters of Sir Arthur Clarington, Frank Thorney, and Winifred: he is also demonstrably entitled to some of the credit for the pathetic figure of Susan, and lent a hand in some of the prose passages, particularly those connected with Carter and his household."<sup>20</sup> Sykes may have staked too wide a claim for Ford; I know of no other analyst willing to give the

inexperienced dramatist that much of this worthy old play. But it is likely that Ford, once he had begun the love interest in the opening scenes, had at least a part in continuing it to the end. As Ford's reputation has grown, Rowley's has fallen: Rowley is not, I think, held in much favor these days. Sykes assigned him only the few sections in which he could find not the slightest hint of either Ford or Dekker.<sup>21</sup> But it will not do to dismiss Rowley entirely, for he probably had a share in the comic scenes. There seems to be a measure of general agreement today on the major divisions of the play (and this is basically the analysis made by Fleay in 1883): Dekker is given the scenes concerning the Witch, Rowley those involving Cuddy Banks, and Ford the ones dealing with Frank Thorney and the women who love him--with the eternal reservation that the play was written in close collaboration and that the work of the three poets "overlaps a good deal."<sup>22</sup> For our discussions of the level of Ford's art in this his first work for the theatre, it will be best to consider only the love plot, though his hand is surely evident in other scenes. The limitation of our discussion to Ford will cause considerable injustice to Dekker and his Mother Sawyer, for the old lady makes a cracking-good witch, but the omission cannot be helped.

The excellence of its characters is the factor which makes The Witch of Edmonton such a rewarding drama. All of Ford's characters are convincing. Frank Thorney is a credible

portrait of a young man too weak to be truly good. He allows himself to sink further and further into guilt until the moment comes when the Witch's dog rubs against his leg and induces him to stab Susan. After that deed there is no peace for Frank. Although he fools everyone into thinking him innocent of the murder, the apparition of his dead wife haunts him until he confesses. Then he appears truly penitent and is forgiven by all but the law, which exacts the full penalty from him.

Winifred has been a woman shared by two men, but she resolves that no taint of dishonour shall ever again infect her name. She wins and retains Frank's love. And her sweetness so wins the hearts of others that after Frank dies for having killed his second wife, the father of the victim takes Win into his home as one of his own.

The opening scene of the play deserves the great praise it has enjoyed. Rarely has character been so rapidly and so thoroughly delineated on the English stage. Though Frank has married Winifred, he cannot yet live with her, for before all else he must first rush home to make sure of his inheritance before his father can hear of the wedding of which he would never approve. Frank is no better a son than husband:

Fathers are  
 Won by degrees, not bluntly as our masters  
 Or wronged friends are; and besides I'll use  
 Such dutiful and ready means, that ere  
 He can have notice of what's past, th' inheritance  
 To which I am born heir shall be assur'd;  
 That done, why, let him know it: if he like it not,

Yet he shall have no power in him left  
To cross the thriving of it.

(I.i.178)

Frank promises his new bride that she shall see him "Once every month at least," and when Win protests that this is not enough, his answer is, "Perhaps oftener;/ That's as occasion serves." The woman, reflecting on the ease with which her honor was lost, makes an appeal for consideration not for herself but for another:

Ay, ay; in case  
No other beauty tempt your eye, whom you  
Like better, I may chance to be remember'd,  
And see you now and then. Faith, I did hope  
You'd not have us'd me so: 'tis but my fortune,  
And yet, if not for my sake, have some pity  
Upon the child I go with; that's your own:  
And less you'll be a cruel-hearted father,  
You cannot but remember that.

(I.i.179)

So before he goes, Frank pledges once more his fidelity to her:

As by the ceremony late perform'd  
I plighted thee a faith as free from challenge  
As any double thought; once more, in hearing  
Of heaven and thee, I vow that never henceforth  
Disgrace, reproof, lawless affections, threats,  
Or what can be suggested 'gainst our marriage,  
Shall cause me falsify that bridal oath  
That binds me thine.

(I.i.179)

Words come easily to Frank. Within mere days he shall wed Susan Carter.

Frank returns home to receive bad news. His father desires him to marry Susan so that her dowry may be used to remove the financial strain on the estate. Old Thorney

already suspects that his son has wed, but the youth repeatedly denies having done so--"What do you take me for? an atheist?" (I,ii.193) he says. He produces a letter from Sir Arthur Clarington, in whose house Frank and Win had been servants, in which his bachelorhood is convincingly affirmed. The father is deceived, and the son proceeds to plan his second wedding, which takes place not long thereafter.

Sir Arthur Clarington had been pleased to write the false letter for Frank, for he thought that with Frank gone he could have his way with Win, as he had done more than once before. But he finds with surprise that this is not to be:

Winifred: If you infect mine ear with any breath  
That is not thoroughly perfum'd with sighs  
For former deeds of lust; may I be curs'd  
Even in my prayers, when I vouchsafe  
To see or hear you! I will change my life  
from a loose whore to a repentant wife.

Arthur: Wilt thou turn monster now? art not asham'd  
After so many months to be honest at last?  
Away, away! fie on't!

Winifred: My resolution  
Is built upon a rock. This very day  
Young Thorney vow'd, with oaths not to be  
doubted,  
That never any change of love should cancel  
The bonds in which we are to either bound  
Of lasting truth: and shall I, then,  
for my part  
Unfile the sacred oath set on record  
In heaven's book? Sir Arthur, do not study  
To add to your lascivious lust the sin  
Of sacrilege; for if you but endeavour  
By any unchaste word to tempt my constancy,  
You strive as much as in you lies to ruin  
A temple hallow'd to the purity  
Of holy marriage. I have said enough;  
You may believe me.

Arthur: Get you to your nunnery;  
There freeze in your old cloister: this is  
fine!

Winifred: Good angels guide me! Sir, you'll give me  
leave  
To weep and pray for your conversion?

Arthur:

Away to Waltham! Pox on your honesty!

Had you no other trick to fool me? well,

You may want money yet.

Winifred:                         None that I'll send for  
To you, for hire of a damnation.  
When I am gone, think on my just complaint:  
I was your devil; O, be you my saint!

(I.i. 184-186)

.This is an excellent scene. The poetry is dramatic and of a very high quality. The contrast between Clarrington's impassioned violence and Winifred's quiet protestations that she is no more the woman she once was intensifies the drama of their final parting. The scene is Winifred's strongest and Oliver is almost ecstatic in his praise of the part Sir Arthur's vicious lines have in it. Of the question "Art not ashamed/After so many months to be honest at last?" Oliver says, "One's mind leaps forward to that other superb surprise, Giovanni's response to the Friar's suggestion that Annabella should be married: 'Marriage! Why, that's to damn her; that's to prove/Her greedy of variety of lust'" (II.v.146). And of Arthur's contemptuous "Get you to your nunnery;/There freeze in your old cloister," the critic maintains that "The daring of the adaptation and the added force the line gets from the very contrast with the original Shakesperian situation must surely mark this use of 'literary allusion' as being at least as fine as anything the twentieth century has achieved."<sup>23</sup> This scene and the one which follows are indeed excellent and



Frank: Give me thy hand, poor woman, do not weep;  
Farewell. . .

(V.ii.267-269)

Just before Frank is led away to death he asks the gentlemen he was wronged--Clarrington, Carter, Somerton--to care for those he leaves behind:

Let me beseech you, gentlemen,  
To comfort my old father, keep him with ye;  
Love this distressed widow; and as often  
As you remember what a graceless man  
I was, remember likewise that these are  
Both free, both worthy of a better fate  
Than such a son or husband as I have been.  
All help me with your prayers.--On, on; 'tis just  
That law should purge the guilt of blood and lust.

(V.ii.270)

And Carter, the father of the murdered girl, does forgive her murderer: "Go thy ways: I did not think to have shed one tear for thee, but thou hast made me water my plants spite of my heart" (V.ii.270). Carter takes Winifred into his own house and he comforts the father of the doomed murderer:

Master Thorney, cheer up, man; whilst I can  
stand by you, you shall not want help to  
keep you from falling: we have lost  
our children, both on's, the wrong way,  
but we cannot help it; better or worse,  
'tis now as 'tis.

(V.ii.270)

At the last "The two old men, the fathers of the murdered and the murdered, walk together from the dreadful scene--and tell us that they must again mix with the bitter busy world to which they belong, and sustain, in its few remaining comforts, the sorrow they can never overcome."<sup>24</sup> This is a



beautiful and moving ending to a play which must stand as one of the most remarkable collaborative efforts in the whole of the English drama. Frank Thorney's weaknesses of character have brought him and those around him to this tragic point in their lives.

The characterization of the minor figures is also very fine. Ford probably had at least a share in some of them, especially Susan, since she is involved in the serious love plot, having long speeches with both Frank and Winifred. The wife Frank murders is a typical Ford heroine. She is sweet, innocent, loving--wholly devoted to her husband:

Prithee, love,  
If I have been immodest or too bold,  
Speak't in a frown; if peevishly too nice,  
Show't in a smile: thy liking is the glass  
By which I'll habit my behaviour.

. . . . .  
You, sweet, have the power  
To make me passionate as an April-day;  
Now smile, then weep; now pale, then crimson red:  
You are the powerful moon of my blood's sea,  
To make it ebb or flow into my face,  
As your looks change.

(II.ii.211-212)

When Frank leaves her for a while to pay a secret visit to the woman he really loves, Susan walks with him a long way and thereby brings on her death. Even after he stabs her and tells her that he never meant to return to her after making this departure, she remains the same loving and forgiving wife. Her last words are these:

Why then I thank you more;  
 You have done lovingly, leaving yourself,  
 That you would thus bestow me on another.  
 Thou art my husband, Death, and I embrace thee  
 With all the love I have.

(III.iii.229)

Let me for once be thine example, Heaven;  
 Do to this man as I him free forgive,  
 And may he better die and better live.

(III.iii.229-230)

Regarding the first passage above, J. A. Symonds wonders "whether such rhetorical embroidery of a poignant situation is pathetic or involves a bathos . . ." <sup>25</sup> Symonds' implication is a fair one, but with this exception little fault can be found in the drawing of Susan.

The characterization of Susan's sister, Katherine, is a brief but interesting one. Katherine is able to encourage her suitor, without betraying her emotions completely:

Somerton: But shall I live in hope, Kate?  
 Katherine: Better so  
 Than be a desperate man.

(I.ii.188)

Kate has parried his question skillfully, never letting him know that he really stands "as an angel" (IV.ii.249) in her eyes.

It is Katherine who takes care of Frank after he inflicts wounds on himself to draw suspicion of Susan's murder away from him. Having lost a sister, she does all she can to bring Frank back to health:

Though her loss strikes you through, and that I feel  
 The blow as deep, I pray thee be not cruel  
 To kill me too, by seeing you cast away  
 In your own helpless sorrow. Good love, sit up;  
 And if you can give physic to yourself,  
 I shall be well.

(IV.ii.247)

When Katherine discovers a bloody knife in the pocket of Frank's breast, she realizes the truth and runs to tell her father of it. Her brief speeches on this occasion are strong ones:

Katherine: I have run madding up and down to find you,  
 Being laden with the heaviest news that ever  
 Poor daughter carried.  
 Carter: Why, is the boy dead?  
 Katherine: Dead, sir!  
 O, father, we are cozen'd: you are told  
 The murderer sings in prison, and he  
 laughs here.

(IV.ii.252)

Carter and his servants bring Susan's open coffin before Frank. The bereaved father accuses Frank of the murder, and Katherine adds these few choice words:

O, thou merciless slave!  
 She was--though yet above ground--in her grave  
 To me; but thou hast torn her up again--  
 Mine eyes, too much drown'd, now must feel more rain.

(IV.ii.254)

Rage and sorrow mingle in Katherine's voice after she realizes that it is Frank Thorney who has killed her suster. There is one more aspect evident in this minor character. Katherine is glad that Somerton has been proven innocent of Susan's murder, but she has some reservations

about marrying now. There is something pathetic in her last speech of the play: if she had not already given her promise to Somerton, perhaps she would not marry at this time:

And but my faith is passed, I  
should fear to be married, husbands are  
so cruelly unkind. Excuse me that I  
am thus troubled.

(V.11.270)

The care that the dramatists have given to this minor personage is commendable. Katherine is a real character, not a mere prop. She loves Somerton; yet Susan's tragedy makes her doubt that love. Katherine could never give herself to a man as wholly as Susan did. She grieves for Susan while at the same time she nurses Frank. The moment she finds out the truth about Frank, she changes from a nurse to an avenger. Brief as her role is, Katherine is one of the more interesting characters in this fine tragedy. Ward has complimented Ford's portraits of Katherine and Susan very highly: "in the delineation of these sisters, Ford . . . has attained to a purity, as well as to a tenderness, unparalleled in any other of his plays."<sup>26</sup>

As a whole The Witch of Edmonton is a very successful play, but it does have some poor moments. William Gifford very readily ascertained the cause behind the chief faults of the work when he said, "Skilfully disencumbered of this poor traditionary juggling, the fable would form a beautiful whole . . ."<sup>27</sup> By "juggling" Gifford was referring to the

practice of having several different writers pen various portions of a play--sometimes the pieces did not fit together as well as they should. This practice may have been the cause which made the plot involving Frank and Susan almost entirely unrelated to the plot centering around Mother Sawyer. Especially at the beginning of the third act, the writers failed to take advantage of an obvious opportunity to bring the two plots together: they never made the Witch turn her anger against Frank; instead they had her loose her hellish powers against a host of minor characters.<sup>28</sup> An anonymous reviewer in Blackwoods noted this fact: "Had the hag worked on the mind of the murderer, the unity of the action would certainly be more impressive," but he also suggested a possible reason for the playwrights' hesitance to involve Mother Sawyer in Frank's crime: "The drama was founded on a real story, and the writers of it, in drawing a picture of the old witch, who had actually been executed, did not wish to paint her blacker than she was, lest in her enormity had been forgotten the cruelty of putting her to death:--and certainly, as the play stands, pity is mingled with our horror, when the old crone is at last dragged to execution."<sup>29</sup>

The play is not greatly harmed by the few occasions in which the elements of the tragedy are not perfectly unified. As Oliver says, "If one chooses to regret that he [Ford] did not serve his dramatic apprenticeship with artists who placed

greater stress on the connection of the different plots of a play, it is, I think, the only regret that is left to a Ford admirer by The Witch of Edmonton.<sup>30</sup> J. A. Symonds has judged that "This want of cohesion is no drawback to the force and pathos of Mother Sawyer's portrait; perhaps the best picture of a witch transmitted to us from an age which believed firmly in witchcraft...." No other plays dealing with witches "are so true to common life; touched with so fine a sense of natural justice. The outcast wretchedness which drove old crones to be what their cursed neighbors fancied them, is painted here with truly dreadful realism." Symonds notes also that The Witch of Edmonton was created "by men whose humanity was livelier than their superstition."<sup>31</sup>

This humanitarianism of Dekker and Ford and Rowley has drawn frequent comment from critics. William Archer, who did not like Ford, admits that the note of humanitarian feeling in the play certainly distinguishes it from the majority of the works of the Jacobean and Caroline periods.<sup>32</sup> F.H. Ristine, recognizing in the play "a moral earnestness" which "enforces a lesson of deep impressiveness," suggests an affinity between the work and the old morality drama.<sup>33</sup> One of the better comments on the playwrights' attitude toward witchcraft is that of Felix Schelling: he notes that The Witch "is humane in its conception of this monster misconception of the age....[with a] touch of sympathy for the miserable old hag whom the persecution and uncharitableness of her

neighbors has driven to extremity. This recognition of an ultimate responsibility outside of the victim of persecution is remarkable in view of the fact that the play contains no word of doubt as to Mother Sawyer's actual possession of the powers of evil."<sup>34</sup>

Most critical evaluations of The Witch of Edmonton have been favorable. The writer for Blackwoods has said, "In this singular drama, there is no high passion--no high imagination--no impressive plot--yet it presents so perfect a picture of human life, that it is felt to be most truly tragical."<sup>35</sup> Schelling calls it "this beautiful play, which is full of truth and tenderness."<sup>36</sup> Ristine declares that the play reaches "heights of remarkable pathos and power."<sup>37</sup> Of Ford's portion of the play, Oliver, who limited to three--I.i., III.ii., V.ii.--the scenes of which he thought Ford was without question the author, said of these: "I am convinced that adequate justice has not yet been done them. They seem to me excellent--and from a man writing possibly his first play, astounding."<sup>38</sup> Certainly, The Witch of Edmonton is an excellent play and Ford's share in it does considerable credit to his reputation.

#### THE SPANISH GYPSY

The Spanish Gypsy was performed by the Lady Elizabeth's company at the Phoenix on July 9, 1623, and at Whitehall before Prince Charles on November 5 of that year. The title-page of the first edition also refers to a performance at

Salisbury Court, presumably by the Queen's company. In 1639 this interesting tragi-comedy became the property of Beeston's Boys, being one of several plays to which William Beeston was granted sole rights of performance by the Lord Chamberlain.<sup>39</sup>

The play was first published in 1653. A second printing followed in 1661. Both of these editions attributed the drama to Thomas Middleton and William Rowley. Evidently the publisher of the second impression, Robert Crofts, simply accepted the ascription made by the publisher of the first edition, Richard Marriot, who is no more trustworthy an authority than Humphrey Moseley has proven to be. In 1653 Marriot entered Revenge for Honour on the Stationer's Register as the work of Henry Glapthorne. But in the next year he published the play as "A Tragedie by George Chapman." Internal evidence indicates that the play is Glapthorne's and Marriot certainly was aware of Glapthorne's authorship when he registered the play. Yet he tried to take advantage of Chapman's greater reputation when he published the tragedy. This casts considerable doubt on his honesty and on the accuracy of the attribution of The Spanish Gypsy to Middleton and Rowley.<sup>40</sup>

However, Marriot's word was accepted by scholars for the next 270 years, and the play of Constanza, the Spanish gypsy, was applauded by admirers of Middleton and Rowley as one of the best of their works. Bullen, the editor of



Middleton, thought the play one of the four on which the playwright's claims to fame were chiefly dependent.<sup>41</sup> Ward thought the play "for the most part finely-written," with parts of it delicate and powerful; he called it "a striking example of the romantic comedy of the late Elisabethan type."<sup>42</sup> Schelling saw in it "a power and effectiveness able to abide comparison with the best of Fletcher."<sup>43</sup> All the critics were agreed that The Spanish Gypsy was an excellent play and that it was primarily the work of Middleton with evidence here and there of Rowley's partnership. Scholarly examination of the problem of establishing the extent of collaboration was capped in 1908 by the edition of Edgar C. Morris, who divided the play scene-by-scene and line-by-line between Middleton and Rowley,<sup>44</sup> a remarkable piece of work when we consider the statement of H. Dugdale Sykes in 1923.

"It is, I am convinced, substantially if not wholly, from the pen of John Ford," said Sykes in his resolution of the problem of the authorship of The Spanish Gypsy.<sup>45</sup> Sykes had five reasons for believing the piece to belong to the dramatist from the Middle Temple. He had first thought of Ford when he noted a double-rimed couplet at the end of I.iii. As Roderigo leaves Clara, the woman he has raped, he says:

My shame may live without me,  
But in my soul I bear my guilt about me.

These lines reminded Sykes of two other couplets in Ford's known works, one in V.ii. of Love's Sacrifice:

No counsel from our cruel wills can win us;  
 But ill's once done, we bear our guilt within us.  
 (101)

and the other in I.i. of The Broken Heart:

Souls sunk in sorrows never are without 'em;  
 They change fresh airs, but bear their griefs  
 about 'em.<sup>46</sup>  
 (222)

Such double rime is very rare in Elizabethan dramatic verse. Webster uses it occasionally, once in The Duchess of Malfi, thrice in The White Devil. It occurs also at the end of the prologue to The Fair Maid of the Inn, a Ford-Webster play. Sargeaunt has noted that Rowley also employs double rime in III.i. of All's Lost by Lust:

Wele threaten his heads losse, if he deny 'um  
 Those that do wrong, had need keepe safety by 'um.

She also suggests that II.ii. of Middleton's Women Beware Women contains a double-riming couplet in Elizabethan pronunciation:

Sin tastes at the first draught like wormwood-water,  
 But drunk again, 'tis nectar ever after.

Sargeaunt concludes "that not too much weight can be given to this argument, as the likeness might well be accidental."<sup>47</sup> However, she has gone too far in trying to twist Middleton's rime into double rime and the extent to which she has been forced to go shows how difficult it is to find such rime in Middleton. It must be admitted in Sykes' favor that double rime, though not confined to Ford, is used by him more often than by any of his contemporaries and that

the device is extremely suggestive of his presence among the writers of the play.

After having been awakened by the faint initial suggestion of Ford's partnership in the play, Sykes soon came upon a recognizable peculiarity of the poet's diction, the use of "float" as a noun synonymous with "flood." Roderigo uses the word in this sense in speaking of his passion for Clara:

I found, even in that beauty that invited me,  
Such a commanding majesty of chaste  
And humbly glorious virtue, that it did not  
More check my rash attempt, than draw to ebb  
The float of those desires, which in an instant  
Were cool'd in their own streams of shame and folly.

(I.v. 25-30)

This suggested a similar passage in Love's Sacrifice, in which Fernando vows he will overcome his passion for Bianca:

. . . though the float  
Of infinite desires swell to a tide  
Too high so soon to ebb, yet, by this hand,  
. . . . .  
I swear,  
Henceforth I never will as much in word,  
In letter, or in syllable, presume  
To make a repetition of my griefs.

(II.iii.48-49)

Sykes stated that he had never seen the word used in this sense except in Ford's writing.<sup>48</sup> Subsequently, Sargeant discovered a few other instances in which "float" served as a nominative,<sup>49</sup> but all of them lie outside the drama and do not invalidate Sykes' conclusions--especially since the two passages cited by him contain parallels other than the

peculiar use of "float." (It is interesting to note that one of the works in which Sargeaunt found "float" used for "flood" was Sir Francis Bacon's History of the Reign of Henry VII (1621), which was a source for Perkin Warbeck.)

With these findings as incentive, Sykes began a vocabulary study of the play and found that most of the more frequently used words of Ford's dramatic language appeared in it. These are all very common words, but words which occur so often in the poet's verse that they attract a careful reader's notice. The researcher commented on four or five of these in particular. "Bosom" is, of course, a quite common word; but Ford uses it more often than other poets: it appears on the average six times in each of his plays; The Spanish Gypsy has it five times. The use of "forfeit" as a noun generally occurs about thrice in a Ford play, and there are three such usages of the word here. Ford's characteristic of writing "creature" to refer to a woman is evident eight times; such a high number certainly suggests Ford. He usually has either "partake" or "partaker" once in every play. I notice in John Bartlett's Shakespeare Concordance that both words are rather rare in Shakespeare; he employs the former eight times, the latter but four; and only once, in Anthony and Cleopatra, do the two words appear in the same play. But both of the words are used by the poet of The Spanish Gypsy.

Sykes also noted a dialectal peculiarity of Ford's speech, the use of "tee" and "dee" for "to you" and "do

you."<sup>50</sup> Sargeaunt places great importance upon the presence of these strange contractions, which occur six times in the play. She recognizes that George Chapman in May Day and Richard Brome in The Northern Lass and The Sparagus Garden also use the forms, but she makes a distinction between their purposes in doing so and Ford's. With Chapman and Brome the words are used most often in prose passages and for low-comedy. With Ford the words are habitual forms: he uses them in his verse and places them without hesitation in the speeches of his heroes and heroines.<sup>51</sup> In this connection, we might add that "a" is used for "he" in The Spanish Gypsy. Although this usage is found in the work of several other dramatists, it is also a frequent characteristic of Ford's diction, one which he does not hesitate to use in the verse of his most serious scenes.

After his vocabulary study, Sykes completed a scene-by-scene analysis of the play, quoting many parallel passages to prove his contention that Ford's style was evident in all scenes, the comic as well as the serious. We might add a few notes to Sykes' list of parallels. The imagery with which Roderigo speaks of his passion for Clara as "feeding/. . . upon so rich a banquet" (I.v.23-24) is the same as that used continually in 'Tis Pity and The Broken Heart.<sup>52</sup> Also, the word "fate" is used significantly in this play. The tendency of many to seize upon the mere mention of the word as a sign of Ford's authorship must be resisted; yet one has to admit

that several of the passages in which it appears here are very similar to Ford's typical emphases concerning fate:

Then henceforth, boy, learn to obey thy fate;  
Tis fallen upon thee; know it, and embrace it;

(V.i. 9-10)

'Tis in vain to storm;  
My fate is here determined.

(V.i. 156)

The miserable and the fortunate  
Are alike in this, they cannot change their fate.

(V.ii.208-209)

"Fate" appears at least three other times in the play, twice more in the fifth act. This heavy concentration suggests Ford--as Davril points out the word appears only once in Middleton's The Changeling.<sup>53</sup> Such parallels and the other evidence led Sykes to the conclusion that the entire play was from the desk of John Ford.

Sykes' article had immediate influence, though most scholars were unwilling to give up the idea of Middleton's association with the play. Oliphant said, "It certainly seems to be from the workshop of Ford and Dekker; but there are also a few uncertain signs of Middleton."<sup>54</sup> In 1933, a decade after Sykes' work, W. D. Dunkel maintained that Middleton wrote the whole play and that it was revised by Rowley and perhaps by Ford; Dunkel feels that Sykes' findings "may at most represent Ford as a reviser."<sup>55</sup> Both Una M. Ellis-Fermor and G. E. Bentley defend Middleton's right to a share in the play. Miss Ellis-Fermor finds Clara's situation

very similar to that of Bianca in Women Beware Women,<sup>56</sup> the play of Middleton most frequently cited as indication of his having had a part in The Spanish Gypsy. Bentley feels that there is "no persuasive evidence" to disprove that Middleton and Rowley wrote the play.<sup>57</sup> Professor Oliver, writing in 1955, two decades after Miss Ellis-Fermor, joins her in saying, "I am not yet prepared to see in this study more than Ford's hand alongside Middleton's."<sup>58</sup> He insists that the characterization and verse are nowhere unlike that of Middleton; and he informs the reader that Middleton, "the chameleon dramatist if ever there was one, is always likely to imitate someone else's style perfectly."<sup>59</sup> Concerning this last bit of revelation, Richard Barker, a Middleton authority, says, "I find this an astounding statement."<sup>60</sup> So do I. Middleton had been writing plays since the early years of the century: why should he attempt to imitate the style of John Ford, who was, so far as we know, a dramatist without reputation in 1623?

Nonetheless, the doubt of Middleton's authorship has become quite widespread as Ford's reputation has grown in the past few decades. Sykes, of course, tried to claim the whole play for Ford. He did admit that traces of Ford's style were infrequent in the prose sections, but he argued that "it would be equally difficult to find internal evidence to establish his authorship of the prose parts of the signed plays."<sup>61</sup> He has not convinced Miss Sargeaunt, who feels

that the gypsy scenes could not possibly be by Ford, because "the good parts of these scenes have a quality of gaiety and cheerful mirth, with some outburst of real lyric beauty full of the charm and freshness of the countryside and the joyousness of the free gypsy life" which are never seen in Ford. Of the gypsy scene opening the fourth act, she says she could more easily believe it to have been written by W. S. Gilbert than by John Ford.<sup>62</sup> But even though she denies that Ford wrote all of the play, she makes no attempt to establish the identity of the collaborator, neither attacking nor defending Marriot's ascription to Middleton. The omission is perhaps significant.

Leech claims that the humor of the gypsy scenes is not only unlike Ford's work but also unlike that of Middleton and Rowley. He suggests that it is close to the good-humored realism of Richard Brome--as seen in A Jovial Crew, or The Merry Beggars, for instance--but he refrains from the positive assertion of Brome's authorship.<sup>63</sup>

Two of the most recent writers on the Middleton canon have been willing to concede that the play is not the work of their subject. Samuel Schoenbaum declares it "most unlikely that either Middleton or Rowley was concerned in The Spanish Gypsy."<sup>64</sup> Richard Barker writes, "I think I can safely say that the play never reads like Middleton. The style is sometimes precious, as in 'Thou lady regent of the air, the moon' and 'She greets me with a bracelet of her tears,' and sometimes



extremely simple, as in Clara's speech after her violation"<sup>65</sup> (Barker is again opposing Oliver, who says the style is never unlike that of Middleton). These statements remove the two most likely candidates for the roles of Ford's collaborators, and no others have been proposed. Oliphant's mention of Dekker in this connection has no external warrant whatsoever; and Oliphant, one of the most subjective of researchers, has presented no internal evidence to support his careless statement. Thus the field is left to Ford.

That the thought, subject, style of Ford is evident in the tragicomedy of 1623 is unmistakable. Yet I find it difficult to deny Middleton some association with the play. I do not know of any commentator on the Ford-Middleton controversy who has remarked on the undeniable references to Middleton's The Changeling in II.i. of The Spanish Gypsy. Alvaro tells the gypsy girl he has raised as his daughter to "be to thyself/Thyself, and not a changeling" (11,103-104). And Constanza answers:

How? Not a changeling?  
 Yet, father, I will play the changeling;  
 I'll change myself into a thousand shapes,  
 To court our brave spectators; I'll change my postures  
 Into a thousand different variations,  
 To draw even ladies' eyes to follow mine;  
 I'll change my voice into a thousand tones,  
 To chain attention: not a changeling, father?  
 None but myself shall play the changeling.

(11. 104-112)

In the space of ten lines "changeling" is mentioned five times, and the whole passage rings of the theatre. C. W. Dilke, the

editor of the 1815 edition of the play, thought that the actor who played Constanza had previously played Antonio in The Changeling. Dyce, Bullen, and Morris all refer to this suggestion.<sup>66</sup>

Furthermore, even though Marriot's word be questioned, that of Sir Henry Herbert, the Master of the Revels from 1622 to 1673, is unimpeachable; and it was in Herbert's Official Register that Malone found the entry which recorded the performance of The Spanish Gypsy "by the Cockpitt company" at court on November 5, 1623.<sup>67</sup> This is the company of James' daughter, Elizabeth, the Queen of Bohemia, the same players who, according to another entry of Herbert's, acted Middleton's The Changeling at Whitehall on January 4, 1624.<sup>68</sup> The Changeling, like The Spanish Gypsy, was not published until 1653; and there is a striking likeness between the title-pages of the two volumes. The similarities in the history of the two plays seemed at first to enforce my belief that Middleton had some association with the earlier production. However, the task of establishing the authorship of the gypsy play by any reference to Middleton's great tragedy is made more difficult by the fact that The Changeling was published by the Humphrey Moseley of ill fame. Now the similarity in the title-pages creates the possibility of fraud. Even though the title-pages make due note of performances "at the Privat House in Drury-Lane and Salisbury Court," they ignore the respective performances before Prince Charles at Whitehall,

both of which are duly noted by Sir Henry Herbert.<sup>69</sup> There is a mystery here somewhere. Since The Changeling is undoubtedly Middleton's, is it not possible that Marriot, in possession of an old play, merely followed the title-page of Moseley and ascribed his property to Middleton and Rowley? There is a connection between the two publishers. On June 11, 1659, at the Stationer's Register, Moseley recorded that twenty-one books had been assigned to him by Marriot--one of these was called The Spanish Gipsies "by Tho: Middleton & Wm. Rowley."<sup>70</sup>

With all these problems unsolved, I see no way of making an acceptable division of the play. At the moment it seems best to give Ford a major share. The identity of the phantom dramatist--if indeed one ever existed--who aided Ford is nowhere near being established. But it would be logical, considering the early date of The Spanish Gypsy, to presuppose a collaborator--probably in the comic plot, since the serious portions of the play consistently show signs of Ford's style.

Each of the two plots is based upon one of the Exemplary Novels of Miguel de Saavedra de Cervantes. In the original the two Spanish stories were totally unrelated, but the authors of the play have managed to unify their disparate borrowings fairly well. La Gitanilla is the source of the comic scenes in which Don John disguises himself as a gypsy in order to be near Constanza until his false arrest causes all disguises to be dropped; La Fuerza del Destino is the basis



Roderigo: Pish.

(I.iii.1-13)

Roderigo speaks only in monosyllables, and Clara's next words-- skillfully, excellently chosen--strike against her betrayer's ear:

Not speak to me? are wanton devils dumb?  
How are so many harmless virgins wrought  
By falsehood of prevailing words to yield  
The easy forfeits of their shames and liberty,  
If every orator of folly plead  
In silence like this untongu'd piece of violence?  
You shall not from me. /Holding him

(I.iii.15-20)

Ford has drawn a spirited woman here. Both her words and her grip upon his arm upset Roderigo. Foolishly he offers her gold, which she spurns:

Gold? Why, alas, for what? The hire of pleasure  
Perhaps is payment, mine is misery;  
I need no wages for a ruin'd name,  
More than a bleeding heart.

(I.iii.26-29)

Roderigo thrusts her aside and leaves her alone for a time. When he returns, Clara speaks gently to him, not in fear but with understanding and a measure of compassion:

I know the heat  
Of your desires are, after the performance  
Of such a hellish act, by this time drown'd  
In cooler streams of penance; and for my part,  
I have washed off the leprosy that cleaves  
To my just shame in true and honest tears;

(I.iii.59-64)

The force of her virtue and goodness touches her betrayer:

Forgive my foul attempt, which I shall grieve for  
 So heartily, that could you be yourself  
 Eye-witness to my constant vow'd repentance,  
 Trust me, you'd pity me.

(I.iii.75-79)

And Clara in turn is also deeply touched. She does indeed take pity on him, forgiving the criminal for the crime which cost her honour. She asks a favor; and Roderigo, continually vowing his repentance, agrees to escort her to a place near the site of her abduction and leave her there in accordance with her wishes. Before they go, Clara speaks thus to the man who has forcefully violated her:

Live a new man: if e'er you marry--  
 O me, my heart's a-breaking!--but if e'er  
 You marry, in a constant love to her  
 That shall be then your wife, redeem the fault  
 Of my undoing. I am lost forever:  
 Pray use no more words.

(II, 96-101)

Clara thus forgives the man who has stolen her honor. And hidden away in the passage is the reason why she can so easily forgive. At the thought of Roderigo's marriage to another, she sighs "O me, my heart's a-breaking!" The subtle hint of her love is all that is given here, but when next we see her she turns away a suitor who has long pleaded his love to her. Nothing could be more typical of Ford than this ability to further the plot through bare hints and intervals of silence.

Clara is an appealing heroine. She sounds very much like Penthea when she asks Orgilus to speak well of her to

whatever woman he might in the future wed. Also, Clara's forgiving nature recalls the similar quality in many of Ford's heroines: Penthea, Susan, Annabella.

There are a few little things in the passage which also bring Ford to mind. Clara's words: "Live a new man" are similar to Fiormonda's charge to D'Avolos in Love's Sacrifice: "learn to new-live" (V.iii. 102). "O me" is a typical epithet in Ford. The similarity between the first two lines of Clara's entreaty and a passage in Love's Sacrifice is interesting:

Roseilli: Learn to new-live. . .

Fiormonda: O, me! is this your love?

(V.iii. 107)

There are a few other minor matters that suggest Ford also. The heavy repetition of

Clara: What are you, pray? what are you?

Roderigo: Husht--a friend, a friend.

Clara: A friend?

(I.iii.6-8)

is reminiscent of the dramatist's style. So is the appearance of "forfeit" (l. 17)--and of "penance" (l. 59) when "penitence" would be the more proper word, this being a frequent usage with Ford. "Leprosy" is often associated with inordinate sexual passion in Ford's verse, and we have already seen this poet's belief in the efficacy of tears. Thus when Clara says, "I have washed off the leprosy that cleaves/To my just shame in true and honest tears" (ll. 63-64), we might feel rather

certain that Ford wrote the passage. And Ford's cadence is frequently evident, as in "I need no wages for a ruin'd name,/ More than a bleeding heart" (11. 28-29). This scene is assuredly Ford's.

Even though the opening scenes are on the whole very well-written, there are passages which are dramatically questionable if not actually intolerable. In answer to Diego's opening question, "Art mad?"--Roderigo answers, "Yes, not so much with wine: it's as rare to see a Spaniard a drunkard as a German sober, an Italian no whoremonger, or an Englishman to pay his debts." This is no time for such a survey of the bad habits of seventeenth century Europe--not when the sight of Clara has upset his reason so. A second error is far worse. After Clara is torn away from her parents, Maria, her mother, cries that the rogues "Have robb'd us of our comfort, and will, I fear,/Her of her honour" (I.i. 51-52)--and Pedro, her father, answers:

This had not wont to be  
Our Spanish fashion; but now our gallants  
Our gentry, our young dons, heated with wines,--  
A fire our countrymen do seldom sit at,--  
Commit these outrages.--

(I.i. 52-56)

In the given situation the first line and a half and the fourth line of this passage are grossly improper. Pedro has no time for a rhapsody on what was "not wont to be" or for a defense of his countrymen's drinking habits. Happily, there are few such violations of decorum in the play.



Far less questionable dramatically is the rapidity in the change of speech and attitudes of Roderigo and Clara. After Roderigo returns to the room, there is a sudden shift in him from desire to repentance:

Roderigo: Sweet, let me enjoy thee  
               Now with a free allowance.  
 Clara: Ha, enjoy me?  
               Insufferable villain!  
 Roderigo: Peace, speak low;  
               I mean no second force. . . .  
 Clara: . . . . .  
               Sir, you can speak now.

(I.iii. 71-74,79)

This is rapid transition, and it may be too rapid to be absolutely convincing. But Roderigo has felt his guilt. His first words represent his last futile attempt to gain this woman without force, and when her fierce answer persuades him that even that hope is lost, he pleads for her forgiveness. There may be some slight weakness in this scene, but there is no gross error.

The remainder of the serious plot sustains the high level of interest reached in the opening scenes. In I.v. a frantic Louis, having realized that Roderigo has kidnapped and raped the woman he loves, confronts the guilty man and tells the news of his torments. Roderigo promises to cure his own passion for Clara by the most rapid means possible:

Roderigo: So much I prize the happiness of friendship,  
               That I will leave the city--  
 Louis: Leave it?  
 Roderigo: Speed me for Salamanca; court my studies now  
               For physic 'gainst infection of the mind.  
 Louis: You do amaze me.

Roderigo: Here to live and live  
Without her, is impossible and wretched.  
For heaven's sake, never tell her what  
I was,  
Or that you know me! and when I find  
that absence  
Hath lost her to my memory, I'll dare  
To see ye again. Meantime, the cause  
that draws me  
From hence shall be to all the world  
untold;  
No friend but thou alone, for whose  
sake only  
I undertake this voluntary exile,  
Shall be partaker of my griefs: thy hand,  
Farewell; and all the pleasures, joys,  
contents,  
That bless a constant lover, henceforth  
crown thee  
A happy bridegroom!

Louis: You have conquer'd friendship  
Beyond example.

(I.v. 56-72)

Later, in a scene that is undoubtedly Ford's, Clara discovers the identity of her abductor; and reveals to Fernando, the father of the youth who wronged her, the story of shame in which all three must share:

In my bosom,  
Next to my heart, my Lord, I have laid up,  
In bloody characters, a tale of horror.  
Pray, read the paper; and if there you find  
                                  /Giving a paper  
Ought that concerns a maid undone and miserable,  
Made so by one of yours, call back the piety  
Of nature to the goodness of a judge,  
An upright judge not of a partial father;  
For do not wonder that I live to suffer  
Such a full weight of wrongs, but wonder rather  
That I have liv'd to speak them...

.....  
Truth copied from my heart is texted there:  
Let now my shame be thoroughly understood;

(III.iii.47-57, 63-64)

and Fernando responds to the sadness of her tale:

This is the trumpet of a soul drown'd deep  
In the unfathom'd seas of matchless sorrows.

(III.iii.67-68)

After locking the door to keep the tale of infamy from the ears of others, Fernando speaks of the writing Clara has given him:

White paper,  
This should be innocence; these letters gules  
Should be the honest oracles of revenge:  
What's beauty but a perfect white and red:  
Both here well mix'd limn truth so beautiful,  
That to distrust it, as I am a father,  
Speaks me as foul as rape hath spoken my son;  
'Tis true.

(III.iii.71-78)

When Clara echoes his words, softly murmuring, "'Tis true," pity, shame, and rage overcome the proud nobleman:

Then mark me how I kneel  
Before the high tribunal of your injuries.  
Thou too, too-much-wrong'd maid, scorn not my tears,  
For these are tears of rage, not tears of love,--  
Thou father of this too, too-much-wrong'd maid,--  
Thou mother of her counsels and her cares,  
I do not plead for pity to a villain;  
O, let him die as he hath liv'd, dishonourably,  
Basely and cursedly! I plead for pity  
To my till now untainted blood and honour:  
Teach me how I may now be just and cruel,  
For henceforth I am childless..

(III.iii.78-79)

But revenge is not what Clara desires. She asks simply, "Can you procure no balm to heal a wounded name?" Fernando rejoices at this expression of her desire to marry the man who stole her virtue; he says, "O, thou'rt as fair/In mercy as in beauty!" He promises that she shall have her wishes. The scene closes as Fernando bids Clara goodbye:

Fernando: Sleep, sleep, young angel,  
 My care shall wake about thee.  
 Clara: Heaven is gracious,  
 And I am eas'd!  
 Fernando: . . . . .  
 Night curtains o'er the world, soft dreams  
 rest with thee!  
 The best revenge is to reform our crimes,  
 Then time crowns sorrows, sorrows sweeten  
 times.

(III.iii.102-107)

Fernando tricks Roderigo into marriage with a woman whom he thinks he does not know, but his wife is really Clara. Then the father informs his son that his wife is a wanton and demands to know what crimes he has done that would cause heaven to curse him with such a wife. Roderigo admits his rape of Clara and exclaims: "O, had I married her,/I had been then the happiest man alive!" (V.i. 37-38). At that moment Clara appears from her hiding place behind an arras to add, "As I the happiest woman, being married" (V.i. 39). Her true identity is then revealed to her husband, and the young couple receives the blessings of all present.

The scenes which deal with the love of Roderigo and Clara are good ones. Characterization is skillfully developed; and the action is in the main quite credible. The poetry in these scenes is often excellent and generally very graceful. Fernando's farewell "Night curtains o'er the world; soft dreams rest with thee!" is as beautiful an individual line as the play contains. The speech in which Fernando comments on the significance of the red and white colors of the paper

proving his son's guilt is dramatically effective in the contrast of its simple language and the fervency of the emotions lying behind the quiet speech. But Ford has not yet learned to refrain from a surfeit of repetition. Clara's muted echo of Fernando's "'Tis true" is effective and justifiable. Nor is the result anything less when Ford combines his tendencies toward repetition and compounding to enable Fernando to call Clara "Thou too, too-much-wrong'd maid;" but when only two lines later Ford allows the same character to speak of the same woman as "this too, too-much-wrong'd maid," the poet seems to have erred. Ford must have been trying to use the phrase to show the extreme compassion and suffering of the distraught Fernando; but instead of adding to the pathos of the scene, the repetition detracts from the effect achieved by the first use of the sad phrase.

The comic plot is a rollicking addition to the serious episodes. Constanza is a precocious young maiden. There is at times a touch of the risqué in her lines, as in her answer to an inquiry about her age: "I am in my teens, assure you, mother; as little as I am, I have been taken for an elephant, castles and lordships offered to be set upon me if I would bear 'em. . ." (II.i. 84-88). She is an admirable dramatic character; as Bullen says, "There are few more charming figures than that of the young maiden Constanza, who in gypsy guise follows her exiled father in his wanderings, singing and dancing in the booths of fairs, sportive as a squirrel and

maidenly as Rosalind."<sup>72</sup>

But Constanza--the laughing, dancing, singing gypsy--is also a soft and yielding woman. She and Don John truly love each other, and their love leads to a near tragic moment, one that could have been written by Ford.

After Don John is sentenced to die for crimes he did not commit, Constanza comes to plead for him. Don Fernando, unaware that the gypsy girl is in reality his daughter, denies that any promises exchanged by her and Don John can be considered binding:

Constanza: Will you yet  
Give me my husband's life?  
Fernando: Why, little one,  
He is not married to thee.  
Constanza: In his faith  
He is; and faith and troth I hope bind  
faster  
Than any other ceremonies can;  
Do they not, pray, my lord?  
Fernando: Yes, where the parties  
Pledg'd are not too unequal in degree,  
As he and thou art.  
Constanza: This is new divinity.

(V.iii.6-12)

Davril exclaims, "Voila la main de Ford." Leech seems to agree.<sup>73</sup> The passage does indeed express a thought typical of Ford.

Ford's share of the comic plot may be very large. The speeches of Alvarez and other minor characters show his style. Alvarez killed the father of Louis in a duel long years before. Since that fateful day, he has traveled disguised as a gypsy, always avoiding the vengeful son of the dead man. But now to

save Don John, he reveals himself to Louis and bids him strike if he will, for he is ready to die:

Tremble not, young man, trust me, I have wept  
Religiously to wash off from my conscience  
The stain of my offence:

(V.ii.21-23)

There is Ford's customary expression of repentance.

Although both plots verge on tragedy, the playwright skillfully guides his characters away from catastrophe. Roderigo's rape of Clara demands vengeance, but her growing love for her attacker leads to a happier resolution. Don John, sentenced to death, is saved by the revelations of the gypsies: Guimara reveals to Fernando that Constanza is his daughter; Alvarez offers his life for that of John, and the vengeful Louis, shocked that this tired old gypsy is the man he has hated all his life, declines to shed his blood. Thus tragedy is averted, and the play is brought to a happy conclusion by the marriages of both sets of lovers. The Spanish Gypsy is for the most part a smoothly written, harmonious play. It is a welcome addition to the canon of John Ford.

#### THE WELSH EMBASSADOR

An anonymous tragi-comedy entitled The Welsh Ambassador exists in manuscript in the Public Library in Cardiff, Wales, and in the Malone Society Reprints. The play was attributed to Dekker in a list of the dramatist's plays compiled around 1678 by Abraham Hill. Most of the play is certainly Dekker's:

such authorities as W. W. Greg, J. Q. Adams, and Henry Bradley have agreed on this.<sup>74</sup> But it seems that parts of it are John Ford's. This attribution was first made by Bertram Lloyd,<sup>75</sup> who agreed that the play was Dekker's except for two scenes (III.iii. and V.i.) of which he says that "Ford is the only likely writer...."<sup>76</sup> The first of these scenes presents the encounter of a wronged lady, Armante, and the woman she believes to be her rival, Carintha. The second deals with King Athelstane's pathetic meeting with his son and the king's repentance for his cruelties to Armante. Lloyd finds both scenes to be full of Ford's characteristic ideas, his pathos and seriousness, and the peculiar cadence of his verse.

The plot of The Welsh Ambassador deals with the love affairs of Athelstane, the King of England. Even though he is contracted to marry Armante, the mother of his son and heir, Athelstane desires to possess the beautiful Carintha. To clear his way to her, he plots the murder of her husband, Penda, son of the Duke of Cornwall. When news comes of Penda's death, Carintha agrees to yield herself to the King, but only on condition that he marry her. Athelstane then steals the marriage contract from Armante and gives it to Carintha.

It is at this point, III.iii., that Ford's style becomes evident in the play. In this scene Armante, with her young son, goes to Carintha's chamber to plead for pity:



"if not for my sake, yett for my child's sake pittty mee"  
 (1253).<sup>77</sup> Her speech is full of pathos, for she knows  
 Athelstane has broken his vows to her in hope of pleasing  
 this young beauty. In answer to Carintha's: "are you the  
 wrong'd Armante" (1207), the sad lady speaks her sorrow:

& you the Queene  
 of the assendant now, love hath resign'd  
 the glories of his raigne (his troath his honor)  
 to a fresh brid, whilst wee whoe are the scorne  
 of his neglect & foyles of yo<sup>r</sup> uprisinge  
 are hurled downe lower then the eyes of pittty  
 can shed a teare for; I am the wrongd Armante

(1208-1214)

This is an appealing passage in its pathos. Later a touch of  
 harshness mingles with the sadness in her speech:

queene of the tymes, the starr of englands court  
 the glorious spheare in wch the kinge (once myne)  
 moves, & there only, oh as you are a woman  
 the daughter of a mother as you can  
 pertake the sence of passion, (greefes & pittty)  
 the torments of Contempt (disgrace & ruin)  
 the miseries of honor (scorne & basenes)  
 lett mee beseech you ere you tread the path  
 (the path that must conduct you to the monument  
 of a lost name) remember by whose fall  
 you clyme to a kings bed think ont what tis  
 to sleep in sheetes forbidden on a stolne pillow  
 a royall Concubine can bee noe more  
 then a greate glorious uncontrolled whore

(1235-1248)

Carintha protests that she is innocent of the designs Armante  
 has accused her of. She returns the stolen contract to the  
 distraught lady and tells her of her plan to cure the King  
 of his lustful passions:

I am so far from vexinge you<sup>u</sup> I'le rather  
 spin out a widdow hood in streacht miseries  
 then play the royall theefe & steale from you<sup>u</sup>  
 whats yours, a kings embraces and name of Queene  
 'twas never neare my thought

(1266-1270)

My purpose is to entertaine the kinge  
 wth all the fulnes of his hopes, nay urge him  
 to speede the hight of his desires, bee instant  
 to have him Crowne mee Queene, but lett mee dye  
 in name, dye in my comforts, in the thoughts  
 of all that honor<sup>r</sup> virtue, if my plotts  
 ayme farder then yor<sup>r</sup> peace, & to awake  
 the kinge out of this dreame

(1294-1301)

The slow, beautiful cadence of Ford is certainly in evidence, and the presence of such a cadence is always suggestive of Ford's share in a work of divided authorship. Lloyd points out that "Queene/of the assendant" is similar to the phrase "Lady [or "Lord"] of the assendant" which occurs elsewhere in Ford's works. He also thinks that "the path that must conduct you to the monument/of a lost name" is similar to the phrasing of a "direct path that leads to a virtuous name" in A Line of Life--but this is at best a very weak parallel. The conclusion of Lloyd's argument is that "the whole passage with its adjurations, its insistence on truth and honour, Carintha's offer to dye in her comforts" is typical of Ford.<sup>78</sup>

Lloyd maintains that the opening scene of the last act contains "by far the most moving episode in the whole play, and almost the only one with any psychological

handling."<sup>79</sup> He assigns it also to Ford. In this scene Carintha's plan "to awake/the kinge out of this dreame" begins. First a Friar brings Athelstane the strange news that Armante has gone to a convent. This revelation is disconcerting and the young Prince's words cause the King even more anxiety:

if cause my blood is yo<sup>r</sup>s  
 you thinck my life may bee some danger 'tee  
 or that my mother in law, when next you marry  
 cannot abide mee; yett Ile doe my the best  
 I can to please her, but theis stepmothers  
 they saie doe seldome love their husbands children

(1703-1703)

When Carintha enters, she immediately proves the accuracy of the Prince's fears--"whie lives hee/to bee my torment"?

(1741-1742) she asks. She leaves in a fury.

Afterwards, Athelstane calls back his son, and in their conversation he realizes the extent of his wrongs:

King: heeres a white forehead  
 of innocence whose allablaster sweetnes  
 rebates my cruelties, tell mee my boy  
 didst never heare thie mother curse thie  
 father  
 or did she not teach thee to curse mee  
 Prince: trulie  
 my lord I cannot lye, nor doe I use to  
 swear  
 an oath, but by my troath you may beleieve mee  
 I never hard yo hard her curse, but often  
 pray for yee  
 & so have I too, hartilie, every daie  
 I learnt it from her mouth  
 King: gon to a nunnery  
 Ile hie mee thether to, by her example  
 learne to bee good & reconcile my poule  
 peace  
 to hirs, alas poore soule ha how have I  
 wronged hir

(1822-1836)

Since this is a tragicomedy, all ends happily. The King and Armante are reunited. And Penda, who has not been slain after all, returns to the arms of Carintha.

As evidence of Ford's authorship of V.i., Lloyd cites seven linguistic peculiarities that are typical of the dramatist's style. The foremost of these are Ford's customary expressions of "tee" and "dee" for "t'ye" and "d'ye" and "a" for "he." The use of "deed la" for "indeed la" to show the simplicity of the speaker and of "shay" for "say" is also highly significant. The phrase "to fawn on," the use of "all what" for "all that" and the ejaculation "Pish" are other signs of Ford's language which appear. All of these are suggestive.

Lloyd also notes a few passages in which he detects the sound and movement of Ford's verse--such passages as "to take truce with your greefes" (1946) and "a hart to melt in penitence for Penda" (1932).<sup>80</sup> These do not seem especially significant.

Several passages that Lloyd does not mention are worth noting. There is a slight connection between the two scenes he assigns to Ford. In the earlier Armante says:

. . . oh as you are a woman  
the daughter of a mother as you<sup>u</sup> can  
pertake the sense of passion, (greefes & pity)

(1237-1239)

In the fifth act the Prince speaks similarly of Carintha:





of the worried father and his young son. Ford's characterization is not always good--the young prince, for instance, is rather insipid--but the poet does succeed in those figures where we might most have expected his success, in the women characters. The pathos of Armante, the temper of Carintha show Ford's art at a point very near its best.

Lloyd merely mentions that in 1598 Henslowe paid Dekker and Michael Drayton for a play entitled Connan Prince of Cornwall. In The Welsh Ambassador Penda is the son of the Duke of Cornwall and while disguised as a soldier he calls himself Connan. J. Q. Adams, writing before the discovery of Ford's association with The Welsh Ambassador, thought that the play had probably been written about 1600 and then revised in 1623. This leads Oliver to ask, "Did Ford alone or Ford and Dekker in collaboration perhaps set out to revise an earlier play of which Dekker had written at least part."<sup>82</sup> That is quite possibly the situation, though the similarity in names does not preclude the possibility that this was a new play. An allusion in the last act to the "yeares 1621: 22/&23" (2161-2162) makes the year 1623 the probable date of composition.<sup>83</sup>

#### THE SUN'S DARLING

The Sun's Darling was licensed by Herbert on March 3, 1624, for presentation at the Cockpit. The title-page credits "John Foard and Tho. Decker" with the authorship of this

"moral masque." This assertion has never been questioned, but there are a few problems concerning the date and method of composition of the play which are far from being settled.

Edmond Malone noted that the diary of Philip Henslowe contains a record of payment to Dekker for a play called Phaeton. Both Gifford and J. Payne Collier thought that Ford might have merely joined Dekker in a revision of this early play, the result being The Sun's Darling.<sup>84</sup> But Fleay stated categorically that "The Mask is palpably a refashioning by Ford of an older production of Dekker's, of whose work hardly any traces are left."<sup>85</sup> The last part of Fleay's dictum is very inaccurate--the style and language of Dekker are unmistakeably evident in many lines--and the first part has been the subject of much controversy. W. W. Greg supported Fleay's contention. So did Ward and Swinburne.<sup>86</sup> Pierce feels that "The steady recurrence of parallels from Dekker throughout the play is in harmony with this theory."<sup>87</sup> A few sections which seem to contain parallels with Dekker but have the meter of Ford are, in Pierce's judgment, "What we should expect if one man's metal had been reforged in another man's furnace."<sup>88</sup> Schelling maintains that if The Sun's Darling were Dekker's play of 1598 then "it has been considerably marred in subsequent revisions by Ford and perhaps others"<sup>89</sup>--an amazing statement considering that Phaeton is lost and could never have been seen by Schelling. Sargeaunt also supports Fleay, noting that there are similarities between



The Sun's Darling and Old Fortunatus which indicate his guess was right.<sup>90</sup> Several more recent writers still accredit Fleay's assumption.

However, Sir E. K. Chambers has some doubts of it. He admits that "allusions to 'humours' and to 'pampered jades of Asia'" seem early, but he emphasizes the fact that in The Sun's Darling "Phaethon is not a character, nor is the story his."<sup>91</sup> The complete destruction of the old theory has been undertaken by W. L. Halstead. This writer maintains that the consistency with which Henslowe, who was not known for consistency in recording titles, speaks of Dekker's work as "fayeton" gives clear evidence of the play's title or subject matter or both. The writer then proves by references to sun imagery and the Phaeton myth in Dekker's Old Fortunatus that Dekker was quite familiar with the Phaeton story, chiefly as it was transmitted through Arthur Golding's 1567 edition of Ovid's Metamorphoses. However, the Ford play contains no features of the ancient myth--the hero is not Phaeton (who, as Chambers said, is not even in the play), nor are any of the incidents in the play similar to those of the rash son of Phoebus. Halstead concludes that "close study of 'The Sun's Darling' shows that the play conforms in no detailed respects nor in general outline to the accepted Elizabethan version of the Phaethon story, nor to any other known version of the story. It follows that 'The Sun's Darling' could not have been a revision of Dekker's lost play."<sup>92</sup>

Oliver thinks Halstead's thesis sound,<sup>93</sup> and it does indeed seem a logical argument. However, other critics still cling to the old idea. In very recent years Muriel Bradbrook has said that the masque was "probably" based on Phaeton;<sup>94</sup> and Leech, admitting that the old case has been greatly weakened by Halstead, still says that The Sun's Darling is "possibly" a revision of the earlier Dekker play.<sup>95</sup> I believe Halstead's work should be more highly credited than this. Fleay's supposition depends on nothing more than the associations in the titles of the works and the linking of Dekker's name with both plays--and Fleay has gone astray before when he attempted to base conclusions on such scanty evidence as similarities in the titles of plays. Although Sargeaunt has maintained that parallels between The Sun's Darling and Old Fortunatus support Fleay's assumption, she lists none of these likenesses, and I am not sure that her argument amounts to very much. Halstead has shown that Old Fortunatus reflects Dekker's knowledge of the Phaeton myth, but this knowledge is not evident in The Sun's Darling. It seems that Miss Sargeaunt has proved nothing. The conclusions of Halstead involve some guesswork, but it does seem logical to suppose that a play called Fayeton would bear many parallels to the Phaeton legend, and that if The Sun's Darling is a revision of Fayeton it would retain a few of these parallels. Therefore, I agree with Oliver that Halstead has proven "that there is nothing to be said for the identification and a

great deal to be said against it."<sup>96</sup> In any event, it is safe to say that if The Sun's Darling is a revision, then it is an extensive one.

One other line of argument against Fleay's guess seems less valid. It is known from the accounts of Henslowe that he paid about f6, the customary price for a play, to Dekker for Fayeton.<sup>97</sup> It has been argued that Henslowe would not have paid f6 for a masque and that the fact that he did pay about that much for Fayeton precludes the possibility that it was a masque and thereby negates the idea that it was the earlier form of The Sun's Darling. I am not certain this is so. The Sun's Darling is not a masque in the ordinary sense of the term: it is a full five act play, a "moral masque." And if Fayeton were also, then Henslowe might have been willing to pay 6 for the work in 1598. Of course, Dekker revised his play for court performance in 1600<sup>98</sup>--but whatever changes his reworking effected cannot be guessed. We only know that in 1623-1624 Ford was associated with a play of a type which lay outside his usual dramatic range.

Gerard Langbaine, writing in the late seventeenth century, ascribed most of The Sun's Darling to Ford, but did not give reasons for doing so. Gifford disagreed, giving Ford credit for only the last two acts, and even there finding Dekker in the comic parts. Gifford did note that there were suggestions of Ford in the Dekker scenes, also. He called the play "a piece of patchwork."<sup>99</sup> Swinburne agreed for the

most part with Gifford.<sup>100</sup> Sherman found parallels with Dekker in all five acts; and many of his findings were used by Pierce in 1912, when he published the results of his long study of the canons of Ford and Dekker.<sup>101</sup> In addition to compiling parallels, Pierce made two objective statistical tests which yielded rather interesting results.

From observations made in the study of the independent work of the dramatists, Pierce concluded that there should be certain marked metrical differences between the sections of The Sun's Darling assigned to Ford and those assigned to Dekker--the scenes by Ford should have less rime and more run-on lines and double and triple endings than those by Dekker. His study of the verse of the masque produced fairly satisfactory results in all respects except in the percentages of riming pentameter lines. Pierce arbitrarily divided Act I into two parts, feeling that the latter was unquestionably by Dekker. The test supports this: in the part assigned to Ford only 2 of 87 lines rime, while in the remainder only 1 of 24 lines lacks rime. The figures for Act II were the desired ones also: of 209 lines 70 have rime, and this high number suggests Dekker. But Act III is also believed to be Dekker's, and there only 18 of 177 rime--a percentage of 10.2, which is very close to the 9.3 (18 rimes in 193 lines) of Act IV, which is considered Ford's. Act V is also thought to be by the younger dramatist; yet the rime is very frequent here: 148 lines out of 240 have it. Pierce cannot explain this, but

he tries:

In V the unriming part is in every way characteristic of Ford, but the large amount of rime favors Dekker. There are, I think, three reasonable hypotheses for this act. The act may be divided about equally between the authors, giving Dekker most of the rime, or we may say that the masque-like character of this scene led Ford to use rime as he never does elsewhere; or we may assume that Dekker wrote the original, and that Ford completely recast it, but kept the manner of riming. Personally, I think the two later theories more probable than the first.<sup>102</sup>

Personally, I think all three theories are improbable. The first possibility is, as Pierce more or less suggests, out of the question: the prose and verse alternate too much for this proposal to be likely. The second I find illogical: there is a "masque-like character" to the whole masque. The third is odd. If Ford were, as Pierce believes, recasting an earlier Dekker play, why should he change rime elsewhere but leave it preponderant in the final act? Later we shall see further reasons why Pierce's third hypothesis is improbable.

Pierce also made an interesting vocabulary test. The independent plays led him to expect that the Ford parts of The Sun's Darling would have far more words of three or more syllables, of Greek or Latin derivation, than the Dekker portions contain. His expectations were realized: his percentages for the second and third acts were .172 and .191 respectively; those for the final two acts were .418 and .425. The figure for the Dekker part of the first act was

.250, far below the .395 of the opening lines of Ford.<sup>103</sup> These statistics are doubtless worth some consideration. Pierce's test is quite complex--unnecessarily so, it seems to me--but the differences between the scenes are clearly marked. As the figures stand, they seem good supporting evidence for the general division of the play.

Pierce, then, gives Ford most of Act I plus the verse sections of Acts IV and V. Dekker gets all the rest--except for occasional passages which Pierce thinks are Ford's revisions of his friend's original material.<sup>104</sup>

This division has been more or less accepted, though generally with some qualifications--Sykes, for instance, on grounds that he did not enumerate, assigned II.ii. to Ford.<sup>105</sup> In 1924 W. J. Lawrence introduced some new information relative to the division of the play. Although Oliver credits much of his argument, Lawrence's article seems to have been generally overlooked. I think it deserves considerably more attention than it has received thus far.

Lawrence concentrates first on the external evidence relative to the masque. The Sun's Darling was one of several plays which the Lord Chamberlain protected for William Beeston, "Governor of the King's and Queen's young company of players at the Cockpit." Lawrence reminds us that the title-page mentions performances at Whitehall and at the Cockpit "by their Majesties' Servants" rather than by Lady Elizabeth's company, who had performed the masque in 1624. This leads to

the assumption that the 1656 edition was made from a copy of the play as it was revised for Beeston's Boys sometime after the company was formed at the Cockpit in 1637. This assumption could be correct, for internal evidence supports this theory.<sup>106</sup>

In 1812 Henry Weber, the first editor of Ford, guessed that Folly's lament, "Farewell 1538" (I.i.114),<sup>107</sup> referred to 1638 and that the date was altered from time to time according to the year in which the play was to be performed. Weber also observed that Winter's eulogy of Raybright is not warranted by the behaviour of the youth. As Act V opens, three clowns discuss the dangers of allowing Raybright "with whole troops and trains of courtiers" (p. 157) to enter their land. The Second Clown says, "they may talk, and call us rebels, but a fig for that. . .let's be true amongst ourselves, and with our swords in hand resist his entrance" (p. 158). At this point Winter discovers them:

What sullen murmurings does your gall bring forth?  
Will you prove't true, "No good comes from the north"?  
Bold saucy mortals, dare you, then, aspire  
With snow and ice to quench the sphere of fire?  
Are your hearts frozen like your clime, from thence  
All temperate heat's fled of obedience?  
How durst you else with force think to withstand  
Your prince's entry into this his land?  
A prince who is so excellently good,  
His virtue is his honour more than blood;  
In whose clear nature, as two suns, do rise  
The attributes of merciful and wise;  
Whose laws are so impartial, they must  
Be counted heavenly, 'cause they're truly just:  
Who does with princely moderation give  
His subjects an example how to live;  
Teaching their erring natures to direct

Their wills to what it ought most to affect;  
 That, as the sun, does unto all dispense  
 Heat, light, nay life, from his full influence:  
 Yet you, wild fools, possess'd with giant rage,  
 Dare in your lawless fury, think to wage  
 War against heaven, and from his shining throne  
 Pull Jove himself, for you to tread upon;  
 Were your heads circled with his own green oak,  
 Yet are they subject to his thunder-stroke,  
 And he can sink such wretches as rebel  
 From heaven's sublime height to the depth of hell.

(158-159)

Lawrence suggests that all of this was a late revision made after 1638. He thinks that Winter's eulogy is intended not for Raybright, but for Charles Stuart. In 1638 Charles had offended the Scots by interfering with the ritual of their Church and by ordering them to adopt a new prayer book. The result of his actions was the Covenanters' Rebellion, and in 1640 the King "with whole troops and trains of courtiers" departed for the North to enforce his commands. Lawrence's theory is supported by a later speech of the Second Clown: "They say this prince, too, would bring new laws upon us, new rites into the temples of our gods; and that's abominable; we'll all be hanged first" (p. 159). This is almost assuredly an interpolation--nowhere has Raybright given any indication of his desire to interfere with religious rites: he has been too busy enjoying himself to care about them. Every editor of the play has remarked about the impropriety of the opening of the last act. Lawrence's article is convincing in its insistence that this impropriety is the result of a late revision.<sup>108</sup>



This compounds the difficulty of dividing the play so much that the task is hardly worthwhile, it seems. Most of the opening lines of the last act are evidently the work of the late reviser. Yet Pierce found parallels--many of them too vague to be of value, I should say--with both Ford and Dekker here. I might add that Winter's retort to the rebellious Second Clown's preaching of rebellion to protect religion sounds like Ford's thought. Winter says, "A most fair pretence/To found rebellion upon conscience!" In A Line of Life Ford says that "there was never any public mischief attempted in a state. . .but religion was their colour to effect it" (394)--but this is admittedly not a conclusive parallel.

Lawrence's findings may help to explain some of the other faults of the play, in addition to the impropriety of much of Act V. Earlier in the play, in I.i., Raybright has a conversation with Folly, who introduces himself to the Sun's darling--yet in Act II Raybright once again is ignorant of Folly's name and once again Folly must introduce himself. This has been taken as a sign of divided authorship--Ford in I, Dekker in II.<sup>109</sup> However, within the space of a few lines in Act II Raybright first declares he has never heard of Lady Humour, then later says, "To my listening ear/The lady's praises often have been sung" (II.i.123). Both Ford and Dekker are fully capable of inconsistencies in plot, but this error is hard to explain. It could again be a result of

divided authorship, but Raybright's two speeches are only nine or ten lines apart.

Furthermore, the authorship of some of the several songs in the play is also questionable now. The song beginning

What bird so sings, yet so does wail?  
'Tis Philomel the nightingale

(II.i.120)

is similar to one appearing in Edward Blount's edition of Alexander and Campaspe:

What Bird so sings, yet so dos wayle?  
O t'is the ravish'd Nightingale.

Only two of the songs from Lyly's plays were published in his lifetime--the rest appeared for the first time in Blount's edition of Sixe Court Comedies by John Lilly published in 1632. While it was confidently believed that The Sun's Darling as we know it was written in 1623 or 1624, it was assumed that Blount had borrowed the nightingale song from The Sun's Darling. Fleay, we will remember, had claimed that the masque is "palpably" Ford's refashioning of a play by Dekker "of whose work hardly any traces are left." But he then turned around and claimed the various songs for Dekker. He also said that "one of these [songs] was printed in Lyly's Campaspe in Blount's 1632 edition, in a form that is evidently the original [by Dekker, not Lyly, he means]. This would lead one to suppose that the other songs in that edition which do not appear in the earlier edition are also

by Dekker"<sup>110</sup>--which is to give Dekker credit for a mountain when his rights to a molehill are not fully certain.

R. W. Bond was familiar with the song from the masque only as it appeared in Thomas Lyle's Ancient Ballads and Songs (1827), wherein author and source were not named. His conclusion was the opposite of Fleay's: he thought it a later version of Lyly's song.<sup>111</sup>

However, W. W. Greg doubts this. He notes that in the masque the song is stanzaic and has a refrain--whereas in Lyly there is no stanzaic arrangement, yet a trace of the same refrain is evident in the repetition of "Cuckoe, to welcome in the spring" in the last two lines. Greg adds that it is more likely "to suppose that a reviser should have altered the fourth line of Dekker's version /<sup>T</sup>And hating earth, to heaven she flies'7, which is altogether inappropriate to the nightingale, than that the change should have been in the other direction"--the fourth line in the Campaspe song reads "And still her woes at midnight rise." Greg has some other points, but these already given illustrate the nature of his argument.<sup>112</sup> His conclusion is that the song in The Sun's Darling is the original. However, now that the possibility of the late authorship of parts of the Ford-Dekker masque has been broached, it appears possible that the 1639 reviser of the masque borrowed the song from Lyly's Campaspe, revised it for his company, and, as all the critics agree, ruined it in the process.



The flattering retribution to my thankfulness.  
The times are better to me; there's no  
taste

Left on the palate of my discontent  
To catch at empty hopes, whose only  
blessedness

Depends on being miserable.

Priest: Raybright,  
Thou draw'st thy great descent from my  
great patron,  
The Sun, whose priest I am.

Raybright: For small advantage.  
He who is high-born never mounts yon  
battlemen<sup>[ts]</sup>  
Of sparkling stars, unless he be in spirit  
As humble as the child of one that sweats  
To eat the dear-earn'd bread of honest  
thrift.

Priest: Hast thou not flow'd in honours?  
Honours! I'd not be baited with my fears  
Of losing 'em, to be their monstrous creature  
An age together: 'tis, beside, as comfortable  
To die upon th'embroidery of the grass  
Unminded, as to set a world at gaze,  
Whilst from a pinnacle I tumble down.

(I.i.110)

Near the end of the first act the Sun promises to fulfill all Raybright's wishes. The youth answers:

Fair beam'd sir!  
I dare not greedily prefer  
Eternity of earth's delights  
Before that duty which invites  
My filial piety: in this  
Your love shall perfect my heart's bliss,  
If I but for one only year  
Enjoy the several pleasures here,  
Which every season in his kind  
Can bless a mortal with.

(I.i.116-117)

The act closes with an address by the Sun to the audience. Gifford called this speech "graceful, elegant, and poetical,"<sup>114</sup> but he believed it to be by Dekker rather than Ford.

Raybright seems a noble figure in the opening act; but unfortunately this nobility which Ford has evidently given him is not continued by the dramatist who wrote the next acts. This inconsistency in his character does not, however, do any real harm to the play--we hardly look deeply into characterization in a masque, even if it is a five-act masque.

Act IV finds Raybright, after having passed through the domains of Spring and Summer, at the court of Autumn. The Sun's darling is greatly pleased by what he sees there:

I have rioted  
In surfeits of the ear, with various music  
Of warbling birds; I have smelt perfumes of roses,  
And every flower with which the fresh-trimm'd earth  
Is mantled in: the Spring could mock my senses  
With these fine barren lullabies; the Summer  
Invited my then-ranging eyes to look on  
Large fields of ripen'd corn, presenting trifles  
Of waterish petty dainties; but my taste  
Is only here pleas'd: th'other objects claim  
The style of formal; these are real bounties.

(IV.i.146-147)

Pomona, an attendant of Autumn, then promises:

We can transcend thy wishes; whom the creatures  
Of every age and quality post madding  
From land to land and sea to sea to meet,  
Shall wait upon thy nod, Fortune and Cupid.  
Love! yield thy quiver and thine arrows up  
To this great prince of time; before him, Fortune!  
Pour out thy mint of treasures; crown him sovereign  
Of what his thoughts can glory to command:  
He shall give payment of a royal prize,  
To Fortune judgment, and to Cupid eyes.

(IV.i.147)

Fortune and Cupid both pledge their devotion. Fortune offers wealth, honor, conquest; Cupid simply offers love:

Chastity, if thou smile on her,  
 Shall grow servile, thou victorious.

(IV.i.147)

Raybright is astonished at their promises:

You ravish me with infinities, and lay  
 A bounty of more sovereignty and amazement  
 Than th'Atlas of mortality can support.

(IV.i.147)

These passages show several signs of Ford's hand. The words "bounty" and "bounties" occur frequently in the work of Ford; both appear here in "These are real bounties" and "A bounty of more sovereignty and amazement." And a few lines later we read: "our bounty gives him/A welcome. . ."

(IV.i.149). Ford often used "creatures," frequently to refer to women. The word is found here in the first line of Pomona's speech, with the reference being to both men and women.

"Style" was not one of the words Sykes mentioned as being characteristic of Ford's vocabulary, but I have found that he frequently uses it; the word appears here in "The style of formal."

Cupid's promise of conquests in love may recall the poem on Cupid in Honor Triumphant. Ford is no more an amoral pagan now than he was then. Pomona straightens that matter out very promptly:

We can be courteous without stain of honour:  
 'Tis not the raging of a lustful blood  
 That we desire to tame with satisfaction,  
 Nor have his masculine graces in our breast  
 Kindled a wanton fire: our bounty gives him  
 A welcome free, but chaste and honourable.

(IV.i.149)

It is not difficult to guess that John Ford wrote that passage. It may be compared to these lines from The Lover's Melancholy:

Blush, sensual follies,  
Which are not guarded with thoughts chastely pure:  
There is no faith in lust, but baits of arts;  
'Tis virtuous love keeps clear contracted hearts.

(IV.iii.87)

After leaving the domain of Autumn, Raybright and his Lady Humour visit the lands of Winter, where life is harsh and pleasures few. Both Raybright and his mistress rapidly become dissatisfied with Winter and wish to return to the youthfulness and freshness of Spring; but at that moment the Sun rises on the last of Raybright's days on Earth. After telling his "Wanton Darling": "Thy sands are number'd, and thy glass of frailty/Here runs out to the last" (V.i.168), the Sun then addresses the audience: the verse is graceful, beautiful as he explains the moral of this "moral masque":

Here in this mirror  
Let men behold the circuit of his fortunes;  
The season of the Spring dawns like the Morning,  
Bedewing Childhood with unrelish'd beauties  
Of gaudy sights; the Summer as the Noon,  
Shines in delight of Youth, and ripens strength  
To Autumn's Manhood; here the Evening grows,  
And knits up all felicity in folly:  
Winter at last draws-on the Night of Age;  
Yet still a humour of some novel fancy  
Untasted or untried puts-off the minute  
Of resolution, which should bid farewell  
To a vain world of weariness and sorrows.

(V.i.168)

With this fine speech--the last four lines of which are unadulterated Ford--the play comes to its close.



Criticism of The Sun's Darling has varied widely.

T. S. Eliot calls it "a dull masque,"<sup>115</sup> and Miss Sargeaunt has judged that "as a whole The Sun's Darling is of little value as a work of art. It is not quite either a play or a masque and could never succeed on the stage. The plot as it stands lacks real coherence, and the characters fall between two stools, as they are neither completely allegorical nor have any interest as real persons." She adds that "considered either as a masque or a play The Sun's Darling is a failure."<sup>116</sup>

Some adverse criticism of the play is certainly justified, but as a whole it is not "a dull masque" and Miss Sargeaunt is most assuredly incorrect in saying that The Sun's Darling "could never succeed on the stage." The title-page contains the report that the play "hath been often presented at Whitehall by their Majesties Servants; and after at the Cock-pit in Drury-lane, with great applause."<sup>117</sup> The publishers repeated this information in their dedication (to Thomas Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton): "While the stage flourished, the poem lived by the breath of general applauses, and the virtual fervour of the court...."<sup>118</sup> The publishers of this piece were Andrew Penneycuicke and Theophilus Bird; the latter was perhaps a friend of Ford, for his name is signed at the bottom of the Prologue of The Lady's Trial.

However, the quarto containing these facts was not published until 1647; and it may have been this matter of chronology which caused both Gifford and Ward to say merely

that the play "seems" to have enjoyed popularity with the people. Gifford accredited the probability of its favorable reception "to its activity and bustle, its May-games, its songs, and its dances."<sup>119</sup> Ward also praised the work, commenting on its "felicitous conception"<sup>120</sup> and adding that "Much of the dialogue is very beautiful." Schelling calls it "exquisite" and "beautiful."<sup>121</sup> Parrot and Ball think it a "charming dramatic poem."<sup>122</sup>

The critics who have found The Sun's Darling a very beautiful creation were surely correct. It is a fragile and delicate lyric, containing many of the most beautiful poetic passages in all of Ford's dramatic work.

#### KEEP THE WIDOW WAKING AND OTHER LOST PLAYS OF 1624

Evidently 1624 was a busy year for Dekker and Ford. Three other plays followed The Sun's Darling in rapid succession. Scholarly detective-work has brought to light some highly important facts concerning one of these, but of the other two we know very little. Fleay thought--I suppose from the rapidity with which they appeared--that all three were revisions of old plays; but subsequent knowledge has proven him wrong as far as one of the plays is concerned.

The earliest of the three lost works of 1624 is The Fairy Knight, licensed by Herbert on June 11, 1624, presumably for Prince Charles' men, with the notation "by Forde, and Decker."<sup>123</sup> Fleay wondered whether the play might not

be a refashioning of Huon of Bordeaux, but he was guessing wildly here.<sup>124</sup> Miss Sargeaunt thinks that the title suggests "a kind of masque"<sup>125</sup>--this seems a good educated guess. A manuscript of a prose play called The Fairy Knight, or Oberon the Second is now in the Folger Shakespeare Library, but it is unlikely that this is the Ford-Dekker play--the fact that it is in prose argues against such attribution. Professor Fredson Bowers believes the work was written by Thomas Randolph while he was still in school at Westminster. Bowers dates it 1623 or 1624 and notes that it was revised sometime before 1637. He suggests that it may have owed something to the Ford-Dekker play. If he is right in his dating, then this is a possibility.<sup>126</sup>

The Late Murder in Whitechapel, or Keep the Widow Waking appeared at the Red Bull Theatre in 1624. The play has long been lost. Fleay wondered whether it might have been Ford's refashioning of The Stepmother's Tragedy, by Dekker and Henry Chettle, but he was cautious enough to observe that "this would hardly be a late murder."<sup>127</sup> Time has proven his caution wiser than his guess.

What little information we now have concerning this lost tragedy is the result of investigation by C. J. Sisson. The play brought two of its writers into difficulties with the law: Thomas Dekker and William Rowley were defendants in a suit tried in the Star Chamber in 1625. Sisson found the records of the court proceedings: these were very nearly

complete, only the final decree being lacking. These records give some information about the play and about the actual incidents which led to the writing of it. Sisson also found an extant ballad entitled "Keeping the Widow Wakeing." This ballad, one of three written about the incidents which inspired the play, gives some additional hints as to the character of the drama.

The tragic incidents behind the play are these. On September 3, 1624, at the Old Bailey, Tobias Audley was tried for felony and Nathaniel Tindall for murder. Tindall had stabbed his mother to death the previous April 9; he was judged guilty and executed. Audley was remanded and remained in jail until he died. The crime for which Audley suffered is not quite so easily summarized as Tindall's matricide.

Young Audley--he seems to have been less than thirty--took Ann Elsdon, a rich widow in her sixties, to a London tavern. For the next three days he kept her in a state of continual drunkenness, during which time, on June 23, a rude marriage ceremony was performed and the marriage consummated. Audley then had legal rights to the widow's fortune, estimated at about £6000.<sup>128</sup>

These were the incidents dramatized in the comic plot of Keep the Widow Waking. Even though the play is lost, portions of its contents may be guessed, for the ballad, which is quoted in entirety in the records, purports to be giving the plot of the play and tells its hearers that they may get all the

details at the theatre:

And you whoe faine would heare the full  
discourse of this match makeing,  
The play will teach you at the Bull,  
to keepe the widdow wakeing.

It seems fully evident--from the ballad, from the title of the play, and from the law suit--that the dramatists had little sympathy with Ann Elsdon. They must have treated her troubles lightly, making much fun of her adventures with a far younger man. Audley was evidently the hero of the piece, beating out three other suitors--a pawnbroker, a horsecourser, and a comfit-maker--for the honor of Ann's hand, and fortune. It may be assumed that the play ends by showing Audley's plot to have been successful, the widow resolving to make the best of the situation.<sup>129</sup>

However, the family of Ann Elsdon did not appreciate the staging of her misfortunes on the boards of the Red Bull. Her son-in-law, Benjamin Garfield, initiated a libel suit in the Star Chamber after failing to obtain a conviction in lower courts. The dramatists whom he charged were Dekker and Rowley. Rowley seems to have died before Dekker's examination on March 24, 1625/6, for the words "now dead" have been interlined after his name in the Bill of Information.<sup>130</sup>

When Dekker was examined he informed the court of his part in the writing of the play: "This Defend<sup>t</sup> sayth, that true it is, Hee wrote two sheetes of paper conteyning the first Act of a Play called The Late Murder in White Chappell,

or Keepe the Widow Waking, and a speech in the Last Scene of the Last Act of the Boy who had killed his mother"<sup>131</sup>--and in his deposition he identified the authors who had aided him: "John Webster...Willm Rowly John ffoord and this deft were privy consenting & acquainted w<sup>th</sup> the making & contriving of the sd play called keep the widow waking and did make & contrive the same uppon the instructons given them...."<sup>132</sup>

It seems likely from this testimony that each of the dramatists was assigned one entire act and perhaps a passage in the final act, for Dekker admitted that he wrote all of the first act and part of the last. Since Dekker was sued by Garfield, his opening portion of the play must have dealt with Ann Elsdon. Presumably Rowley was also engaged in the comic plot. This leaves The Late Murder in Whitechapel section of the play to Ford and Webster primarily, though Dekker has said he had "a speech" in it. Neither the court proceedings nor the ballad quoted in the trial record comments on this part of the drama. Another extant ballad, The penitent Sonnes Teares for his murdered Mother, deals with Tindall's crime, but it does not comment on the play at the Red Bull. A second ballad on the same subject was also registered at the Stationer's, but it is not extant.<sup>133</sup>

Keep the Widow Waking, written by four of the most famous playwrights of the time, was licensed in September 1624, probably for performance by Prince Charles' company. The precise date of the entry is not given, but it must have been

between the third and the fifteenth, the dates of the entries immediately above and below. The play was acted shortly after the license was obtained, for by November 26--the date of the Bill of Information--the legal battle had begun.<sup>134</sup> Obviously the work was hurriedly pieced together; but a play which had Dekker and Rowley combining to make light of an elderly widow's marriage with a young rogue and Ford and Webster joining their temperaments to create a matricide must have been a memorable theatrical experience.

There is one element concerning the play which bothered Sisson greatly, that is, the wording of the license. Dekker very explicitly mentions the full title of the play he collaborated in as "The Late Murder in White Chappell, or Keepe the Widow waking...w<sup>ch</sup> play (as all others are) was licensed by S<sup>r</sup> Henry Herbert Knight, M<sup>r</sup> of his Ma<sup>t</sup>ies Revells, authorizing thereby boeth the Writing and Acting of the sayd Play."<sup>135</sup> Yet, Herbert's entry reads: "A new Tragedy, called, a Late Murther of the Sonn upon the Mother: Written by Forde, and Webster."<sup>136</sup> The omission of the names of Dekker and Rowley and of the sub-title are not really worrisome. However, the title entered by Herbert is considerably different from that given by Dekker in his transcript and echoes some of the wording in the titles of the ballads. Sisson surrenders: "No conclusion can reasonably be drawn from the wording of the licence...."<sup>137</sup>

However, a second version of Herbert's entry is

found in an independent transcript of information from the office-book which is written in a nineteenth century hand. This interesting record, perhaps that of Craven Ord, is now in the Folger Shakespeare Library. In this transcript the entry reads:

1624, Sept. A new Trag: call: a Late Murther of  
the sonn upon the mother writt: by M<sup>r</sup> Forde  
Webster & this Sept. 1624. 2II.  
The same Trag: writt: M<sup>r</sup>. Drew & allowed for  
the day after theirs because they had all manner  
of reason.<sup>138</sup>

Herbert's second entry was not copied by either Edmond Malone or George Chalmers, and therefore it did not appear in Professor Joseph Quincy Adams' edition of Herbert's office-book. I assume, then, that Sisson was completely unaware of this portion of the official record. Perhaps it clears up the mystery for us. Evidently two plays were written on the subject of Nathaniel Tindall's murder. One was the work of Thomas Drew or Drue, and was probably acted at the Fortune by the Palsgrave's company, for whom Drew had completed The Duchess of Suffolk some eight months before.<sup>139</sup> The existence of two plays on the same subject must have caused considerable confusion. It is possible that the title Herbert wrote in his book was roughly the title of Drew's play of perhaps a confused mixture of both titles. He did not record the name of Drew's play, calling it simply "The same Trag;" but it is highly unlikely, considering Dekker's testimony, that both plays had exactly the same title. Tindall's crime evidently



achieved great notoriety; Herbert obviously must have thought that the dramatization of the matricide had enough appeal to justify licenses for two similar tragedies. Perhaps this notoriety and the fact that the murder plot was common to both plays and the fact that the existence of two plays on the same subject had caused Herbert some headaches as a licenser--perhaps all this explains why he mentioned only Ford and Webster, the authors of most of the murder plot, in his entry and why he recorded only that portion of the title of the play which seemed at the moment most significant to him.

Among other things this second intriguing entry informs us that the licensing fee for the Ford-Webster play was double the usual amount. The difficulties attendant on the licensing of two plays on the same subject may have been the factor which led to the increased licensing fee (or is it possible that the "2<sup>11</sup>" in Herbert's cryptic calligraphy refers to the fee for both plays?). At any rate the Master of the Revels authorized the production of the Ford-Webster play first; the Drew play had to wait until the next day for its initial performance. It is not clear what "all manner of reason" refers to. It could signify that the King's men, the company for which Ford and Webster wrote, had presented good reasons why their play should have priority. Or it could mean that Drew's play was licensed, even though another play had already been written on the same subject, because the Palsgrave's

company showed good reasons why their play should also be performed.<sup>140</sup>

The Bristowe Merchant, "by Forde, and Decker," was licensed by Herbert "For the Palsgrave's Company" on October 22, 1624. It is one of a very large number of plays licensed in late 1623 and 1624 for performances at the new Fortune Theatre as the company was presumably trying to rebuild their repertory, which had been lost in the fire that destroyed the old Fortune on December 9, 1621.<sup>141</sup> Fleay, guessing at titles still, thought this might be a revision of The Bristol Merchant, written by John Day in 1602.<sup>142</sup> Willi Bang made the suggestion that The Bristow Merchant might have been based upon one of Dekker's pamphlets, Penny-Wise, Pound Foolish, which tells a story of a Bristow merchant;<sup>143</sup> and in her study of Dekker, Mary L. Hunt repeats this hint.<sup>144</sup> Sir E. K. Chambers has supposed that The London Merchant, mentioned by Moseley and Warburton as by Ford, could have been a mistake for The Bristow Merchant.<sup>145</sup> This is all the information and guesswork available on the play.

#### THE FAIR MAID OF THE INN

The Fair Maid of the Inne "By Fletcher" was licensed by Sir Henry Herbert on January 22, 1626, for performance at the Blackfriars Theatre by the King's company. The play was first published in the 1647 folio edition of Beaumont and Fletcher.<sup>146</sup>

Despite this external evidence there has been considerable doubt that the most celebrated collaborators of the time had very much to do with The Fair Maid. It has long been thought that Beaumont had no share at all in the play and that Fletcher wrote only a small part. The task of establishing the authorship of this fine tragicomedy has led to remarkable differences among the analysts of the work.

In the 1880's Robert Boyle suggested that Massinger wrote a substantial portion of the play. This is the only point on which subsequent critics have been able to agree. The question "Massinger and who?" still remained, and from 1880 until the 1920's no two answers were precisely the same.

Boyle added the names of Fletcher and Rowley to Massinger's, giving most of the play to Rowley; and Bullen was in general agreement that Massinger and Rowley had done most of the work. Fleay denied that Rowley had any part in writing The Fair Maid, claiming that Ben Johnson and Fletcher had been Massinger's collaborators. Ward and G. C. Macaulay were more cautious. Ward said the play was by Massinger, Fletcher, and another; Macaulay, even more conservative, simply said Massinger and another. Oliphant thought most of the play to have been by Beaumont and Fletcher originally, with a later revision or revisions by Rowley and Massinger. On the other hand, A. H. Cruickshank, a Massinger authority, gave almost all to Fletcher, reserving only the first act and one other scene for his subject. Chelli declared the play

Fletcher's, but revised by Massinger and perhaps Rowley.<sup>147</sup>

H. D. Sykes was greatly dissatisfied with the ascription of The Fair Maid of the Inn--the majority of opinion being that it was by Massinger and Fletcher and perhaps others. He believed the play to be by Massinger and Webster, and he pulled Bullen to his support.<sup>148</sup> However, one scene, IV.i., bothered Sykes greatly: he could not find any positive signs of either dramatist in it; for lack of any real evidence he concluded that it was "probably a mixed Massinger and Webster scene." This was in 1915. By the time his essay was reprinted, Sykes had changed his mind: "I now (1924) believe this scene to be Ford's, and that there are traces of his hand elsewhere in the play." He credited his friend William Wells with the suggestions which led to his change of opinion.<sup>149</sup> Sykes and Wells convinced both Oliphant and F. L. Lucas, though the former refused to give up his belief that signs of Fletcher's work were still in evidence. The accepted opinion in the last thirty years has been that The Fair Maid of the Inn was written by Philip Massinger, John Webster, and John Ford.

Sykes never published his notes on Ford's share in The Fair Maid of the Inn, but he did turn them over to F. L. Lucas, the editor of Webster, who has made good use of them. Lucas agrees that IV.i. is by Ford and he states that "the relations between Cesario and Bianca are Ford's in the main."<sup>150</sup>

Lucas sees Ford's hand first in III.i., where the tell-tale contractions "t'ee" and "d'ee" appear. Lucas also notes the phrase "injury to sweetnesse," which he compares with "injury to gratefulness" and "injury and infamy to goodnes" in IV.2 of the same play and also to "injury to goodness" in The Ladies Trial.<sup>151</sup> Such a phrase is certainly frequent with Ford.

In the next scene there are at least two brief passages which no one familiar with the plays and thoughts of Ford will have difficulty in recognizing as his. In the first, Mariana replies to the Duke's command that she marry by saying:

But Sir, 'tis in no Prince nor his pre<sup>r</sup>ogative,  
To force a woman's choice against her heart.

(III.ii.190-191)

In the second, Mariana resolves to make the best of her difficulties, and Mentivole agrees that that is what she should do:

Mariana: If all faile I will learn thee to conquer  
Adversity with sufferance.  
Mentivole: You resolve Nobly.

(III.ii.271-273)

The language Ford uses here is the same he uses in The Golden Mean and A Line of Life.

One slightly longer passage is in Ford's style also:

Cesario, th'art a man still, Education  
Hath moulded thee a Gentleman, continue so;  
Let not this fall from greatnesse, sinke thee lower  
Than worthy thoughts may warrant--yet disclaime

All interest in Albertos blood, thou has not  
One drop of his or mine.

(III.ii.119-124)

In several places the phrasing in these lines recalls other passages in Ford--Lucas prints one of these, the lines "I may curse/The interest you lay claim to in my blood" from The Lady's Trial (II.ii.35), and refers to another, "Proud of the blood I claim an interest in" from The Broken Heart (I.ii.224).

Two words characteristic of Ford, "bounty" (1.140) and "partage" (1.61), appear in III.ii. The former is found with very great regularity in the poet's work and the latter is an oddity of his language, which as Lucas points out, occurs twice in Perkin Warbeck<sup>152</sup> (the word is rare: it does not appear in Shakespeare's works).

Both Lucas and Oliphant applied Pierce's statistical methods to III.2. and concluded that their findings supported Ford's authorship. The figures of the two analysts vary slightly on some of the tests, but Lucas examined only one hundred lines whereas Oliphant presumably considered the entire scene (273 lines in Lucas' edition but probably less in that used by Oliphant). Their findings are very close despite this difference. Lucas figures 71 per cent of the lines have double (or feminine) endings: Oliphant figures 54.9 per cent. For run-on lines Lucas shows 52 per cent, Oliphant 50.6 per cent. Oliphant finds that 15 per cent of the lines have triple endings; Lucas does not figure triple

endings but he notes that they are present in the scene and calls them characteristic of Ford. Lucas figures 16 per cent of the lines to be resolved, Oliphant omits this category. There is no rime at all; and as Oliphant points out, this suggests Ford's latest period, for rime is extremely rare in The Fancies Chaste and Noble and The Lady's Trial. He thinks Ford and Massinger revised the play in the 1630's. A connection between The Fair Maid and Ford's last plays is also made by Lucas, who admits that his figure of 71 per cent for feminine ending is very high, but states that in parts of The Fancies Chaste and Noble he has found the percentage of double endings running as high as 77 in passages which also contained 10 per cent of double endings.<sup>153</sup>

Lucas also tested eighty lines in each of the other two scenes attributed to Ford and contrasted his findings with the results of his analyses of the Massinger and Webster scenes of the play. As he says, "These figures work out very well." In III.i. feminine endings occur in 50 per cent of the lines and resolved feet in 13.75 per cent, with 45 per cent run on lines. In IV.i. the figures are respectively 60, 13.75 again, and 38.75. In all three of these categories there is a great difference between the work of Ford and Webster, and in each case Massinger falls somewhere between the others. In none of the Ford or Massinger scenes is there any rime; Webster rimes only six lines.<sup>154</sup> These figures, which would not be conclusive in themselves, are useful as corroborative

evidence to the testimony of parallel passages and other evidence.

In IV.i. the signs of Ford's hand are everywhere. The dialectal peculiarities "t'ee" and "d'ee" appear twice each, and "a" is used for "he" in the second line of the scene--all of these immediately suggest Ford.

The words "warrant" (1.51), "bosome" (1.66), and "stile" (1.214) are present. The last of these occurs in a line that sounds very much like Ford: "New stile us man and wife." Ford often uses "new" as a modifier in this fashion--for instance, "Learn to new-live" in Love's Sacrifice (V.iii.107). Also, Miss Sargeaunt has noticed that "girle" (1.168) is pronounced as a disyllable--a usage which is customary with Ford.<sup>155</sup>

The language of this scene suggests some parallels in Ford's other works. The peculiar use of "free" as a modifier for "welcome" in Cesario's "free welcome" (1.31) to Biancha recalls Pomona's expression "welcome free" in The Sun's Darling (IV.i.149). The phrase "a second bed" (1.180) is also in The Broken Heart (II.iii.252), and "I have a suit" (1.122) occurs, I think, at least four other times in Ford's work. Ford's fondness for phrases beginning with "Lord of" or "Lady of" may be reflected by "I will be Lord of my owne pleasures, Madame--" (1.151) and "Clarissas birthright, Marianas dower/Thou shalt be Lord of" (11.247-248).

Ford's habit of repetition, markedly present as early



as Fame's Memorial, is noteworthy here. To Cesario's question "Shall I in earnest never be your bedfellow?" (1.188), Mariana answers, "Never, <sup>^</sup> never; and tis for your good too" (1.189). Mariana and the reader know what Cesario does not, that he is speaking to his mother. Mariana's quiet repetition of "never" is thus heartfelt, and it produces a moment of exquisite pathos. In this scene we may also mark the tendency of the poet to repeat the last word or phrase of one line at the very beginning of the next:

...Biancha,  
That which thou call'st misfortune is my happines,  
My happines Biancha.

(IV.i.51-53)

Often with Ford this repetition involves two speakers--so it does here as Mariana echoes Clarissa:

Clarissa: Tis Just too.  
Mariana: Yes and tis Just Clarissa.

(IV.i.181-182)

The recognizable cadence of John Ford's dramatic poetry--soft, slow, melodic, graceful--permeates the scene. It is in these lines of Biancha:

But as I am a maid Sir--and I'faith  
You may beleve me, for I am a maid--

(IV.i.79-80)

and it is in these of Mariana:

Alas too many yeares are numbred  
In my account to entertaine the benefit  
Which youth in thee Cesario and ability  
Might hope for and require--it were Injustice

To rob a gentleman deserving memory  
Of issue to preserve it.

(IV.i.191-196)

Finally the scene shows some of those ideas and thoughts which appear frequently in Ford's plays. Lucas notes Cesario's comment on fate, "My fate springs in my owne hand and Ile use it" (1.17); and he aptly compares these words with those of two other young men: of Giovanni in 'Tis Pity, "I hold fate/Clasp'd in my fist" (V.v.198), and of Orgilus in The Broken Heart, "Ingenious Fate has leapt into mine arms" (I.iii.235).<sup>156</sup> Equally significant is Mentivole's speech on the sanctity of human love, a thing of beauty in which Ford believed devoutly:

Clarissas troth and mine,  
Cesario, are seconded in a character  
So plaine and certaine, that except the hand  
Of heaven which writ it first, would blot it out  
again, againe,  
No human power can raze it.

(IV.i.277-281)

Oliphant, writing in 1927 with Lucas' evidence before him agreed that Webster and Ford had shares in the play, but he argued that Fletcher had also written parts of it. He quotes two short passages in IV.i.--asking: "are not these passages, brief as they are, obviously Fletcher's?" The first of these is

Then I am lost againe--I have a suit too;  
Youle grant it if you be a good man.

(IV.i.122-123)

Those lines may be Fletcher's, but the fact is not at all obvious. Ford frequently wrote "I have a suit tee." I wonder whether "too" is the printer's mistake for "tee." The mistake would be odd, since "tee" does appear twice elsewhere in the scene. But it seems to me that "too" makes little sense coming from Bianca--"tee" would make sense, of course. The second passage in question reads:

Biancha: Ile pray for yee  
                   That you may have a vertuous wife, a faire one,  
                   And when I am dead--  
 Cesario: Fy, fy--  
 Biancha: Thinke on me sometimes,  
                   With mercy fo[r] this trespasse.

(IV.1.131-136)<sup>157</sup>

That passage I would say is not "obviously Fletcher's." It could most definitely be Ford's--the unhappy parting of Penthea and Orgilus may be cited as a parallel:

                                  Live, live happy,--  
 Happy in thy next choice. . .  
 . . . . .  
 And O, when thou art married, think on me  
 With mercy. . .

(II.iii.252)

When Clara parts from Roderigo in The Spanish Gypsy, she also refers to his future bride. In the intense emotional scenes between the lover and the beloved, Ford often repeats the same thoughts. Perhaps he did so here.

Bertram Lloyd, an authority on Ford, agreed that the dramatist had a large share in The Fair Maid. He said, "I can't doubt that Ford wrote IV.i.; and much of III.i.

(possibly III.2 also) seems to me more like him than Webster. . ."<sup>158</sup> Sargeaunt and Oliver conclude that Ford had a share in the play, particularly in IV.i.<sup>159</sup>

Lucas calls IV.i. a "charming scene" and a "masterly and moving episode." He adds, "It is far the best single scene in the play and one of the most charming in all its author's work."<sup>160</sup> The scene is indeed an excellent one and does more credit to Ford's reputation than an entire play such as The Queen or The Fancies Chaste and Noble can do.

In this scene Bianca, the fair maid of the Inn, comes to propose marriage to Cesario. She has previously declined his hand because she thought him the high-born son of Mariana and Alberto and feared that marriage to one of her low station would ruin his fortune. But now that Mariana has disclaimed Cesario, Bianca, thinking him of no higher birth than her own, feels that she may return his protestations of love. Her speech is tender and womanly:

Without breach then  
Of modesty I come to claim the Interest  
Your protestations both by vowes and letters  
Have made me owner of--from the first hours  
I saw you, I confess I wisht I had beene  
Or not so much below your ranke and greatnesse,  
Or not so much above those humble flames  
That should have warm'd my bosome with a temperate  
Equality of desires in equall fortunes.  
Still as you utter'd Language of affection,  
I courted time to passe more slowly on  
That I might turne more Fool to lend attention  
To what I durst not credit nor yet hope for:  
Yet still as more I heard, I wisht to heare more.

(IV.i.59-72)

The phrase "temperate/Equality of desires in equall fortunes" may sound too academic to have come from an innkeeper's daughter, but otherwise her words are perfect. Cesario's answer, however, is cold, and Bianca confesses that for love of him she has "Willingly betraid/My selfe to hopelesse bondage" (IV.i.74-75). As Frank Thorney did in an earlier play, Cesario replies flippantly to the woman who worships him:

A good girle,  
I thought I should not miss  
What [e'er] thy answer was.

(IV.i.76-78)

His smug reference to her former rejection of him prompts Bianca to explain the reasons why she could not accept his love before. The passage is extremely fine:

But as I am a maid Sir--and I'faith  
You may beleeve me, for I am a maid--  
So deerely I respected both your fame  
And quality, that I would first have perisht  
In my sicke thoughts then ere have given consent  
To have undone your fortunes by inviting  
A marriage with so meane a one as I am--  
I should have dyed sure, and no creature knowne  
The sicknesse that had kill'd me.

(IV.i.79-87)

To this beautiful sincerity, Cesario returns a mocking: "Pretty heart,/Good soule, alas! alas!" (IV.i.88-89). Bianca decides that it is time to frame her purposes in as plain a language as possible:

I come willingly  
To tender you the first fruits of my heart,

And am content t'accept you for my husband,  
Now when you are at lowest.

(IV.i.93-96)

In good deed Sir,  
Tis pure love makes this proffer.

(IV.i.99-100)

Now Cesario's superciliousness becomes unbearable:

I beleeeve thee-  
What counsaile urg'd thee on, tell me--thy Father  
My worshipfull smug Host? was't not he wench?  
Or Mother Hostesse? ha?

(IV.i.101-104)

Finally vision penetrates the blindness of love, and the  
maiden understands:

Had your heart,  
Your hand and tongue been twins you had reputed  
This courtesy a benefit--

(IV.i.113-115)

Cesario tells her that even though he has lost his birthright,  
he still has hopes of honors and possessions. Thus, he is  
still above her rank in fortune; and Bianca sadly admits,  
"Then I am lost againe" (IV.i.122). She asks his pardon for  
having bothered him with a complaint of love, "Thinke on me  
sometimes,/With mercy fo[r] this trespasse" (IV.i.135-136);  
and having retained her dignity throughout her hurt, she turns  
to go with this parting wish: "All goodness dwell with yee"  
(IV.i.141). Bianca of the Inn is one of the most appealing  
of the heroines of John Ford.

Cesario's nature shows plainly in his speech after

Bianca's departure:

Harmlesse Biancha!  
Unskild, what handsome toyes are maids to play with!  
How innocent! but I have other thoughts  
Of nobler meditation--

(IV.i.142-145)

The entrance of Mariana and Clarissa interrupts him, and he turns to speak to Mariana, the widow of Alberto, in this fashion:

my felicity,  
Thou comest as I could wish, lend me a lip  
/As/ soft, as melting as when old Alberto,  
After his first nights triall taking farewell  
Of thy youthes conquest tasted.

(IV.i.145-149)

Mariana answers with consummate accuracy: "You are uncivil"  
(IV.i.150).

Now that Mariana has denied that he is her son, Cesario hopes to gain the lady's wealth by marrying her--but she peremptorily cools his ardor:

howere  
I may be forc't to marry, yet no tyranny,  
Perswasions, flattery, guifts, intreats, or tortures  
Shall draw me to a second bed.

(IV.i.177-180)

After questioning her further on this matter and finding her resolute, Cesario immediately turns his attentions to Clarissa, the daughter of the woman to whom he had proposed a moment before:

Cesario: your charity  
Will call me still your servant?  
Mariana: Still my son.

Cesario: Right Madam, now you have it, still your son.  
 The Genius of your blessings hath instructed  
 Your tongue oraculously--wee will forget  
 How once I and Clarissa enterchanged  
 The tyes of brother and of sister, henceforth  
 New stile us man and wife.

(IV.i.206-214)

Mariana, knowing that Cesario and Clarissa are brother and sister, lets out this secret in her furious reply. Luckily, her son does not catch the slip--instead he taunts her:

Mariana: Thus some catch at a matrons honor  
 By flying lust to plot Incestuous witchcrafts,  
 More terrible than whoredomes; cruell mercy  
 When to preserve the body from a death  
 The soule is strangled!  
 Cesario: This is more then passion.  
 It comes neere to distraction.

(IV.i.236-242)

The next passage is an excellent piece of writing. Clarissa's answer goads Cesario into a fury, and Mariana mocks him with almost the very words he has but now used to her:

Clarissa: . . .for a husband sir, I dare not owne you,  
 My faith is given already.  
 Cesario: To a Villaine--  
 I'll cut his throat.  
 Mariana: "Why this is more then passion.  
 It comes neere a distraction."

(IV.i.256-261)

At this point Mentivole enters to claim Clarissa as his bride, and all but Cesario exit. Now having lost in the space of a few minutes both of the women who could pave his way to fortune as well as the maid of the Inn who offered him true affection, Cesario surveys his situation:



Good, very good, why here's a complement  
 Of mirth in desperation--I could curse  
 My fate. O with what speed men tumble downe  
 From hopes that soare to /o/ high! Biancha now  
 May scorne me justly too--Clarissa married,  
Albertos widdow resolute, Biancha  
Refus'd, and I forsaken--let me study--  
 I can but dye a Batchelor, thats the worst on't.

(IV.i.299-306)

At the very beginning of the scene, with the future  
 looking exceedingly bright for him, Cesario had declared:

The harvest of my hopes is now already  
 Ripen'd and gather'd, I can fatten youth  
 With choice of plenty, and supplies of comforts,  
 My fate springs in my owne hand, and Ile use it.

(IV.i.14-17)

Now at the end he could curse his fate. The scene has sent  
 his hopes swirling a full half-circle, and his dreams of  
 fortune are smashed. Scene IV.i. is, then, an integral  
 unit, and a more neatly wrapped package in a collaborative  
 play could hardly be imagined.

The Fair Maid of the Inn is a worthy tragicomedy.

The central situation is rather improbable: Mariana, fearing  
 that her son, Cesario, may be harmed in a family feud, goes  
 before the Duke and disinherits her child, claiming he is the  
 son of a falconer; the danger to Cesario does not seem great,  
 and therefore the motivation of Mariana's extreme action is  
 made to appear very weak. However, the plot is otherwise a  
 credible one. There is also a large measure of excellent  
 comedy in the work--much of it evidently Webster's. The  
 characters are the chief glory of the piece. Bianca is a

completely charming maiden; Mariana is a vigorous portrait; and Cesario--selfish and egotistic, but having some nobler qualities--is an exceptionally vivid character in IV.i.

Lucas concludes by saying that if we were to select "a specimen of the Jacobean drama after the great age, which should justly represent, not its very highest level, but its general merits, we might choose far worse than The Fair Maid of the Inn."161

Ford wrote the heart of the play--III.i., III.ii., and IV.i.--and the last of these three scenes is certainly one of his best. The poetry is as excellent as that of the serious plot of The Spanish Gypsy and the scene lacks the occasional miswriting of the earlier play. His share in The Fair Maid is in every way a credit to his fame.

#### BEAUTY IN A TRANCE AND LATER LOST PLAYS

In the summer and fall of 1630 the plague had once again caused the suspension of plays in London. This enforced idleness did, of course, cause great distress among the players left without a livelihood. On September 20, Charles made a free gift of £100 to his company and ordered them to "attend upon us and our dearest Consort the Queen at our next coming to Hampton Court." On September 30 the King's Company gave the first of twenty or twenty-one plays, the largest number ever given to that time by the company during a court season. The entertainment performed on November 28

was Beauty in a Trance. The title suggests that it was a masque.<sup>162</sup>

No further mention of the piece is known until August 7, 1641, when it appeared on the list of plays belonging to the King's men which the Lord Chamberlain ordered the Stationers not to allow to be printed without the consent of the company.

It was one of forty-one plays entered at the Stationer's Register by Moseley on September 9, 1653. Here for the first time, the name of John Ford was linked with the play.

This attribution was repeated by Warburton, who claimed that the play was accidentally burned by his servant.<sup>163</sup> After this, there is no further mention of Beauty in a Trance.

It has been suggested that Beauty in a Trance may be the same play as The Duke of Lerma--assuming that "Trance" is being used in its seventeenth century meaning of "a state of suspended judgment or indecision."<sup>164</sup> But this is mere conjecture, and Moseley mentioned both Beauty in a Trance and The Duke of Lerma by name.

Of the three other plays attributed to Ford by Moseley after mid-century nothing is known. Three comedies, An Ill Beginning Has a Good End and a Bad Beginning May Have a Good End, The Royal Combat and The London Mercant were registered at the Stationer's on June 29, 1660. All are now lost.

The first of these has already been discussed in the opening of the chapter. All we can add here is another

supposition from Fleay, who after noting that it was acted at court under the slightly altered title of A Bad Beginning Makes a Good End, immediately assigned it a third title, saying it "was probably the same as The London Prodigal (cf. v.2 "Such bad beginnings oft have worser ends").<sup>165</sup> This is completely impossible to accept. The similarity of one proverbial line in the Prodigal is hardly convincing.

Of The Royal Combat absolutely nothing is known, other than that both Moseley and Warburton said such a play existed. Moseley must have had the manuscript since he paid to license it, but whether Warburton ever had it or not is conjectural. Moseley calls the play a comedy<sup>166</sup>--in which case the title is slightly misleading. Perhaps it was a tragicomedy.

Of The London Merchant Fleay said this "was the original name of The Knight of the Burning Pestle (see the Induction; "And now you call your play The London Merchant . . .")." The reasoning is infirm. By 1660 The Knight of the Burning Pestle had been printed three times. Moseley himself had published the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio in 1647, and in his own play-lists of 1660 he advertised The Knight of the Burning Pestle under that title. He was not ignorant of the title of the Beaumont and Fletcher play.<sup>167</sup>

E. K. Chambers has suggested that London in the title is a mistake for Bristow: The Bristow Merchant was licensed for the Palsgrave's men in 1624 under attribution to Ford

and Dekker.<sup>168</sup> This guess is possible but still merely conjectural.

In addition to his known independent work and several lost plays, Ford has now been assigned shares in five extant collaborative plays. Some of Ford's best writing is in these early works. The Witch of Edmonton is an excellent play; The Spanish Gypsy and The Fair Maid of the Inn are good ones; The Sun's Darling has its better moments. On the other hand The Welsh Ambassador is not a good play, but it does contain an interesting scene or two and these are probably by Ford. If Ford's talents are to be justly evaluated, his share in these works of multiple authorship must be recognized, for they do considerable credit to his reputation as a poet, as a dramatist, and as a man who understood the tortures the heart all too frequently imposes upon itself.

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<sup>1</sup>F. G. Fleay, A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama (London, 1891), II, 231.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Marc Parrott, "A Note on John Ford," Modern Language Notes, LVIII (April, 1943), 247-248. Alfred Harbage, "Elizabethan-Restoration Palimpsest," Modern Language Review, XXXV (July, 1940), 292, believes Warburton did possess the plays he listed.

<sup>3</sup>Parrott, pp. 248-249. For the complete entry see E.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford, 1951), IV, 180.

<sup>4</sup>Parrott, p. 249.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 252.

<sup>6</sup>E. H. C. Oliphant, Shakespeare and His Fellow Dramatists (New York, 1929), II, 18-19.

<sup>7</sup>See F. E. Pierce, "The Collaboration of Dekker and Ford," Anglia, XXXVI (1912), 141, 147.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 307.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 306.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 307.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. See The Works of Thomas Dekker, ed. John Pearson (London, 1873), II, 198.

<sup>12</sup>H. Dugdale Sykes, "The Authorship of The Witch of Edmonton," Notes and Queries, CLI (December 25, 1926), 456.

<sup>13</sup>Several parallels between the prose tract and the play are provided by A. H. Bullen in his notes prefixed to The Works of John Ford, ed. William Gifford, with additions by Reverend Alexander Dyce (London, 1895). All citations from The Witch of Edmonton are from the third volume of this edition, hereafter referred to as Gifford-Dyce.

<sup>14</sup>The Complete Works of Algernon Charles Swinburne, ed. Sir Edmund Gosse and Thomas J. Wise (New York, 1926), XII, 393.

<sup>15</sup>Gifford-Dyce, III, 185.

- <sup>16</sup>Swinnburne, XII, 394.
- <sup>17</sup>Sykes, pp. 435-436, summarizes the opinions of most of the other critics and lists his sources. In addition see Pierce, pp. 292-310 *passim*; Swinnburne, p. 394; and A. W. Ward, A History of English Dramatic Literature (New York, 1899), III, 75.
- <sup>18</sup>H. J. C. Oliver, The Problem of John Ford (Carlton, Victoria, 1955), p. 25.
- <sup>19</sup>M. Joan Sargeant, John Ford (London, 1935), p. 34.
- <sup>20</sup>Sykes, p. 436.
- <sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 436-437.
- <sup>22</sup>See Sargeant, p. 34, and Fleay, II, 231.
- <sup>23</sup>Oliver, p. 27.
- <sup>24</sup>"The Witch of Edmonton--Ford, Dekker and Rowley," Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine, VI (January, 1820), 417.
- <sup>25</sup>J. A. Symonds, Shakespeare's Predecessors in the English Drama (London, 1924), p. 379.
- <sup>26</sup>Ward, III, 75.
- <sup>27</sup>Gifford-Dyce, I, xxvii.
- <sup>28</sup>Symonds, p. 381.
- <sup>29</sup>Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine, p. 415.
- <sup>30</sup>Oliver, p. 29.
- <sup>31</sup>Symonds, p. 382.
- <sup>32</sup>William Archer, The Old Drama and the New (Boston, 1924), p. 128.
- <sup>33</sup>Frank H. Ristine, English Tragi-Comedy (New York, 1910), p. 127.
- <sup>34</sup>Felix Schelling, English Drama (New York, 1914), pp. 121-122.
- <sup>35</sup>Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine, p. 409.

<sup>36</sup>Felix Schelling, Elizabethan Drama (New York, 1908), I, 362.

<sup>37</sup>Ristine, p. 127.

<sup>38</sup>Oliver, p. 25.

<sup>39</sup>Leech, p. 130. For Beeston's list see J. Payne Collier, The History of English Dramatic Poetry (London, 1831), II, 192.

<sup>40</sup>H. Dugdale Sykes, "John Ford the Author of 'The Spanish Gypsy'" in Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama (New York, 1924), pp. 185-186.

<sup>41</sup>The Works of Thomas Middleton, ed. A. H. Bullen (London, 1885), I, xciii.

<sup>42</sup>Ward, II, 508-509.

<sup>43</sup>Schelling, Elizabethan Playwrights (New York, 1925), p. 253.

<sup>44</sup>Edgar C. Morris, ed., The Spanish Gipsie and All's Lost by Lust (Boston, 1908), pp. xlviii-xlix.

<sup>45</sup>Sykes, "The Spanish Gypsy," p. 183. The citations from The Spanish Gypsy are from the sixth volume of the edition of A. H. Bullen--see note 41. Internal references are to act, scene, and line numbers.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>47</sup>Sargeaunt, pp. 42-43.

<sup>48</sup>Sykes, "The Spanish Gypsy," pp. 185-186.

<sup>49</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 43.

<sup>50</sup>Sykes, "The Spanish Gypsy," pp. 186-189.

<sup>51</sup>Sargeaunt, pp. 44-45.

<sup>52</sup>See Donald K. Anderson, Jr., "The Heart and the Banquet: Imagery in Ford's 'Tis Pity and The Broken Heart," Studies in English Literature, II (Spring, 1962), 209-217.

<sup>53</sup>Davril, p. 127.

<sup>54</sup>Oliphant, p. 18.



<sup>55</sup>W. D. Dunkel, "Did Not Rowley Merely Revise Middleton?," Publications of the Modern Language Association, XLVIII (September, 1933), p. 803.

<sup>56</sup>Una M. Ellis-Fermor, The Jacobean Drama (London, 1936), p. 148.

<sup>57</sup>Gerald Eades Bentley, The Jacobean and Caroline Stage (Oxford, 1956), IV 895.

<sup>58</sup>Oliver, p. 34. See Ellis-Fermor, p. 151.

<sup>59</sup>Oliver, p. 34.

<sup>60</sup>Richard Barker, Thomas Middleton (New York, 1958), p. 209.

<sup>61</sup>Sykes, "The Spanish Gipsy," p. 199.

<sup>62</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 51.

<sup>63</sup>Leech, p. 32.

<sup>64</sup>Samuel Schoenbaum, Middleton's Tragedies, a Critical Study (New York, 1955), p. 247.

<sup>65</sup>Barker, p. 209.

<sup>66</sup>See Morris, p. 130.

<sup>67</sup>Gifford-Dyce, III, 227. See Joseph Quincy Adams, The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert (New Haven, 1917), p. 51.

<sup>68</sup>Adams, p. 51.

<sup>69</sup>The only differences are a small "h" in "house" on the title-page of The Changeling and two marks of punctuation. See Bentley, IV, 862, 893.

<sup>70</sup>Bentley, IV, 893.

<sup>71</sup>Ward, II, 508; Leech, p. 32.

<sup>72</sup>Bullen, I, lxxii.

<sup>73</sup>Davril, p. 126; Leech, p. 33.

<sup>74</sup>James R. Sutherland, editor's note to Bertram Lloyd, "The Authorship of The Welsh Ambassador," Review of English Studies, XXI (July, 1945), 201.

<sup>75</sup>The ascription was made originally in a little-known article "Two Notes on Elizabethan Orthography," Review of English Studies, II, (April, 1926), 206. However, it was mentioned only incidentally here. Lloyd died before publishing the results of his study of the play, which were found among his papers and transcribed by his wife--see the note immediately above. All subsequent notes to Lloyd's comments on The Welsh Ambassador refer to this second article.

<sup>76</sup>Lloyd, p. 193.

<sup>77</sup>All citations from The Welsh Ambassador are from the edition in the Malone Society Reprints: The Welsh Ambassador, ed. W. W. Greg and H. Littleton (Oxford, 1920). The internal references are to line numbers in this edition.

<sup>78</sup>Lloyd, p. 200.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., pp. 201-202.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>82</sup>Oliver, pp. 36-37.

<sup>83</sup>Greg and Littleton, p. v.

<sup>84</sup>Gifford-Dyce, III, 102.

<sup>85</sup>Fleay, I, 232.

<sup>86</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 62 (for Greg); Ward, I, 470; Swinburne, XII, 392.

<sup>87</sup>Pierce, p. 168.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>89</sup>Schelling, Elizabethan Playwrights, p. 132.

<sup>90</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 62.

<sup>91</sup>Chambers, III, 300.

<sup>92</sup>W. L. Halstead, "Dekker's 'Phaethon,'" Notes and Queries, CLXXV (November 26, 1938), 381-384.

<sup>93</sup>Oliver, p. 39.

<sup>94</sup>Muriel Bradbrook, The Growth and Structure of English Comedy (Los Angeles, 1956), p. 128.

<sup>95</sup>Leech, p. 36.

<sup>96</sup>Oliver, p. 39.

<sup>97</sup>W. W. Greg, ed., Henslowe's Diary (London, 1904), I, 83-84.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., I, 125.

<sup>99</sup>Gifford-Dyce, III, 169.

<sup>100</sup>Swinburne, XII, 392-393.

<sup>101</sup>See Pierce, pp. 152-166.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., pp. 144-145.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., pp. 167-168.

<sup>105</sup>Oliver, p. 39.

<sup>106</sup>W. J. Lawrence, "The Problem of Lyly's Songs," The Times Literary Supplement (December 20, 1923), p. 894.

<sup>107</sup>All citations from The Sun's Darling are from Gifford-Dyce, III.

<sup>108</sup>Lawrence, p. 894.

<sup>109</sup>Gifford thinks this inconsistency may be excused because "perhaps Folly has changed his dress...for he first enters in rags"--see Gifford-Dyce, III, 122-123.

<sup>110</sup>Fleay, I, 232.

<sup>111</sup>The Complete Works of John Lyly, ed. R. Warwick Bond (Oxford, 1902), II, 551.

<sup>112</sup>W. W. Greg, "The Authorship of the Songs in Lyly's Plays," Modern Language Review, I (October, 1905), 49-50.

<sup>113</sup>Lawrence, p. 894.

<sup>114</sup>Gifford-Dyce, III, 117.

<sup>115</sup>T. S. Eliot, "John Ford" in Essays on Elizabethan Drama (New York, 1932), p. 128.

- 116 Sargeaunt, p. 63.
- 117 Gifford-Dyce, III, 102.
- 118 Ibid., p. 103.
- 119 Ibid., p. 102.
- 120 Ward, II, 470; III, 75.
- 121 Schelling, Elizabethan Drama, II, 297; English Drama, p. 216.
- 122 T. M. Parrott and R. H. Ball, A Short View of Elizabethan Drama (New York, 1943), p. 113.
- 123 Bentley, III, 249-250; Joseph Quincy Adams, ed., The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert (New Haven, 1917), p. 29.
- 124 Fleay, I, 232.
- 125 Sargeaunt, p. 18.
- 126 See Leech, pp. 127-128 and Bentley, III, 250.
- 127 Fleay, I, 232-233.
- 128 Charles Jasper Sisson, Lost Plays of Shakespeare's Age (Cambridge, 1936), pp. 80-97.
- 129 Ibid., pp. 106-108.
- 130 Ibid., pp. 97-102.
- 131 Bentley, III, 255. See Sisson, p. 110.
- 132 Bentley, III, 254. See Sisson, p. 111.
- 133 Sisson, pp. 96-97.
- 134 Adams, p. 29; Sisson, p. 102.
- 135 Bentley, III, 255; Sisson, pp. 114-115.
- 136 Adams, p. 29.
- 137 Sisson, p. 115.
- 138 Bentley, III, 253.
- 139 Ibid., pp. 253-254, 286.

- <sup>140</sup>Ibid., p. 253.
- <sup>141</sup>Ibid., p. 247.
- <sup>142</sup>Fleay, I, 233. See Bentley, III, 247.
- <sup>143</sup>Willi Bang, ed., Materialien Zur Kunde des Älteren Englischen Dramas, XIII (1908), vi.
- <sup>144</sup>Mary Leland Hunt, Thomas Dekker (New York, 1911), pp. 187-189.
- <sup>145</sup>Chambers, III, 316.
- <sup>146</sup>Adams, p. 31; Bentley, III, 354-355.
- <sup>147</sup>Much of the controversy is summarized in E. H. C. Oliphant, The Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher (New Haven, 1927), pp. 463-464 and in The Works of John Webster, ed. F. L. Lucas (London, 1927), IV, 148. Also see Fleay, I, 23, 222.
- <sup>148</sup>H. Dugdale Sykes, "A Webster-Massinger Play: 'The Fair Maid of the Inn'" in Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama, p. 140; Oliphant, Beaumont and Fletcher, p. 464.
- <sup>149</sup>Sykes, "A Webster-Massinger Play," p. 150.
- <sup>150</sup>Lucas, pp. 150-151.
- <sup>151</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>152</sup>Ibid., p. 151.
- <sup>153</sup>Ibid., pp. 150, 253-254; Oliphant Beaumont and Fletcher, p. 472. On rime in the late plays cf. Pierce, p. 143.
- <sup>154</sup>Lucas, pp. 253-254.
- <sup>155</sup>Sargeaunt, p. 64.
- <sup>156</sup>Lucas, p. 151.
- <sup>157</sup>Oliphant, Beaumont and Fletcher, p. 469.
- <sup>158</sup>Ibid., p. 485.
- <sup>159</sup>Sargeaunt, pp. 64-65; Oliver, pp. 43-46.
- <sup>160</sup>Lucas, pp. 151, 153.

<sup>161</sup>Ibid., pp. 153-154.

<sup>162</sup>Bentley, I, 26-29.

<sup>163</sup>Ibid., III, 438.

<sup>164</sup>Alfred Harbage, "Elizabethan Restoration Palimpsest,"  
Modern Language Review, XXXV (July, 1940), 300.

<sup>165</sup>Fleay, I, 234-235; See Bentley, III, 445.

<sup>166</sup>See Bentley, III, 458.

<sup>167</sup>Fleay, I, 234-235; See Bentley, III, 448.

<sup>168</sup>Chambers, III, 316.







JOHN FORD: THE TEMPLE AND THE STAGE

VOLUME II

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Howard Lee Ford

B.A., North Texas State University, 1959

M.A., North Texas State University, 1960

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## CHAPTER V

### PLAYS OF QUESTIONABLE AUTHORSHIP

All of the plays examined in the previous chapter have been assigned to Ford by the great majority of scholars who have studied the problems in the poet's canon. The internal evidence in the extant plays is sufficiently strong to persuade almost all modern analysts that the dramatist had at least a share in all five of the dramas. Some doubts about the validity of the attributions of a few of the lost plays may exist, but in most cases the external evidence of his authorship is accepted at face value.

Ford's hand has been suspected in six other extant plays. It is extremely doubtful that the dramatist had any part in the writing of four of these. This leaves two others, The Laws of Candy and The Duke of Lerma, in which signs of Ford's style and thought seem to appear. In neither case is there any external evidence to reinforce attributions to Ford, and scholarship is not yet in sufficient agreement on the value of the internal evidence to justify the inclusion of the plays in the canon at this time. At any rate both of the works are interesting and are worth some attention from admirers of the art of John Ford. In this chapter we shall consider the evidence in support of Ford's authorship of The Laws of Candy and The Duke of Lerma.

THE LAWS OF CANDY AND OTHER BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER PLAYS

The Laws of Candy was also included in the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio, but there has been considerable question about the accuracy of the attribution. In addition to Beaumont and Fletcher, scholars have supported Massinger, Field, Shirley, and Ford as the authors. The first historian to suggest Ford was, I think, William Wells, who regarded the play as being "mainly by Ford, with nothing of Beaumont and Fletcher."<sup>1</sup> Wells' notes largely converted Oliphant, though he still gave Fletcher a share. After duly noting parallels and making a study of the metrics of the verse, using Pierce's system, Oliphant said that part of I.ii. was Fletcher's, with all the rest being by Ford.<sup>2</sup> Bertram Lloyd thought The Laws of Candy "likely to be by Ford in parts." He wrote, "There are signs of his special vocabulary and phraseology passim, and in the first edition several more such indications, which were altered in the second edition. I'm convinced of his hand in V and III, and think that he likely wrote a part of the rest (e.g., I.i.)."<sup>3</sup> Always a conservative in such matters, Bentley has opposed the theories of the "disintegrators"; he admits that "the play has little of Fletcher's normal dramatic effectiveness or clever manipulation," but he insists that "such shortcomings are scarcely enough to identify the work of some other dramatist." Never referring to Ford by name, he adds, "There may be some suggestion of revision in the fact that the play is notably shorter than

the Fletcher norm."<sup>4</sup> More recently, Cyrus Hoy, engaged in a fresh study of the traditional canon of Beaumont and Fletcher, also assigned The Laws of Candy to Ford.<sup>5</sup> It seems likely, despite Bentley's objections, that Ford's own canon is due in the near future to be enlarged by one.

The evidence for Ford is varied and interesting. Oliphant, equipped with notes lent by Wells, points out that "all what" occurs instead of "all that" in I.ii. of The Laws of Candy, that the phrase "Things done long ago" in III.ii. is not found elsewhere in Beaumont and Fletcher but is found in The Lovers Melancholy, IV.ii., and that "the vocabulary is markedly Fordian."<sup>6</sup> From Wells' notes he reproduces the following parallels:

For which this kingdom is throughout the world  
Unfellowed  $\angle$  "unfellowed" being Theobald's approved  
emendation<sup>7</sup>

(I.i.238)

Whose beauty is through all the world unfellowed

(TQ: I.ii.585)

Out of mine eyes,  
As far as I have thrown thee from my heart

(II.i.257-258)

I would hurl ye  
As far off from mine eyes as from my heart;

(LM: III.ii.62)

There's the quintessence,  
The soul, and grand elixir of my wit

(LM: II.i.33)

The great elixir, soul, and quintessence  
Of all divine perfections

(LM: II.i.33)

Love me or kill me. . .  
Say, must I live or die?

(IV.i.279)

Must I now live or die? . . .  
Love me or kill me

(TP: I.iii.126)<sup>8</sup>

In each of the last two citations several lines intervene between the two lines quoted. Another parallel to these may be found in 'Tis Pity: "You must either love, or I must die" (I.iii.125).

Hoy's decision was based upon a linguistic study of such matters as "an author's use of such a pronominal form as 'ye' for 'you,' of third person singular verb forms in '-th' (such as the auxiliaries 'hath' and 'doth'), of contractions like ''em' for 'them,' 'i'th' for 'in the,' 'o'th' for 'out of the,' 'h'as' for 'he has,' and ''s' for 'his' as in 'in's,' 'on's' and the like)."<sup>9</sup> On this basis he assigned The Laws of Candy to Ford.

My own study indicates that a large number of parallels can be found which do indeed suggest that at one time or another John Ford had something to do with The Laws of Candy. Of the words most distinctive of Ford's vocabulary, "bosom," "bounty" and "comfort/s" appear very frequently. "Jewel" and "crave" occur several times also; "partake" is used at least



twice; and "anticks," "style," and "forfeit" (as a noun) appear at least once. It might be added that Ford's typical epithet "Pish" is frequent also. Customarily, the poet uses both "girl" and "pearl" as disyllabics: "girle" appears twice, but each time before a mark of punctuation so that it is not easy to see how many syllables the writer meant the word to have--in neither case, however, does the scansion of the line require a disyllable.

Several phrases and individual lines sound like Ford's typical expressions. "I have a sute too" occurs in I.ii.240<sup>10</sup>--again "too" could be a mistake for "tee": I see no reason why Cassilanes would have a suit "too," since, strictly speaking, Antinous made no suit to the lords. The law of Candy entitled Antinous to make a demand--not merely to plead a suit. Another sentence--"I rather shall admire, than envy virtue" (III.i.262)--needs little commentary; it seems to be pure Ford; but of course there is nothing to preclude the supposition that any of a dozen playwrights could have expressed such a thought. Ford's fondness for phrases beginning with "Lord of" might be reflected in one slight parallel: "if she swallow/the bait, I am Lord of both" (III.i.264)--this is, however, a very weak example.

Considerably more impressive is the great frequency with which some human activity is implicitly linked to an honorific abstract term--as in "debtor to your nobleness" (III.i.266). Other such passages are "the love I bear/To



are among the most commonly used words in his vocabulary, and another, "Chronicle," appears a few lines earlier in Antinous' speech. Numerous parallels to such a phrase as "But as you are/Great, and well worthy to be stiled Great" have been noticed in our discussions of previous works, and Antinous' claim to an "interest. . .in honour" is similar to several passages printed in our discussion of III.ii. of The Fair Maid of the Inn.

A second passage has an authentic ring also; Cassilanes speaks here to his daughter, Annophel:

Thy father's poverty has made thee happy;  
 For though 'tis true, this solitary life  
 Sutes not with youth and beautie, O my child,  
 Yet 'tis the sweetest Guardian to protect  
 Chast names from Court aspersions; there a Lady  
 Tender and delicate in years and graces,  
 That doats upon the charms of ease and pleasure,  
 Is ship-wrackt on the shore; for 'tis much safer  
 To trust the Ocean in a leaking ship,  
 Than follow greatness in the wanton rites  
 Of luxurie and sloth.

(III.i.264)

As early as Fame's Memorial Ford warned of the sensuality of courts. In A Line of Life he noted that false flatterers often betrayed greatness to wanton sins. Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy insisted that the idleness of courts was one of the great dangers to virtue. After Ford read the idea there he repeated it devoutly in his plays: perhaps we have yet another example of the poet's preoccupation with the thought here in The Laws of Candy.

A third passage shows another customary thought of Ford:

For when sad thoughts perplex the mind of man,  
 There is a Plummēt in the heart that weighs,  
 And pulls us (living) to the dust we came from;  
 Did you but see the miseries you pursue,  
 . . . . .  
 . . .you would flye  
 Unto some Wilderness, or to your Grave,  
 And there find better Comforts than in me,  
 For Love and Cares can never dwell together.

(IV.i.277)

Ford frequently writes of this world as an earth of cares and woe wherein the comforts of peace are found within the grave. Of course, he shares the thought with numberless other writers, but here the phrasing and tone seem to be Ford's.

Thus, it seems that John Ford does indeed have a considerable share in The Laws of Candy, but possibly it is not all his. The play was printed in the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio. The King's company was involved in the preparation of the Folio, and it seems unlikely that they would have included a play that had no connection with either of their dramatists. Oliphant and Bentley both feel that Fletcher wrote parts of The Laws of Candy, and this seems a reasonable assumption to me.

The date generally assigned to the play is dependent upon the names of the cast printed in the second Folio: the list contains the names of Joseph Taylor and Nicholas Toolie; significantly that of Richard Burbage is absent. Burbage, the principal actor of the King's company, died in March 1619. Taylor was with Prince Charles' men as late as January or February of that year. Tooley died in June 1623. The actors

fix the date sometime between March 1619 and June 1623. This is the accepted opinion, but it is based upon an assumption that the cast listed in the Folio is the original cast. Presumably, this is so, but the fact is not positively established. The absence of an entry for The Laws of Candy in Herbert's office-book may indicate that the play was performed before Herbert took office in 1622. However, this is not necessarily the case, for many entries have been lost. The date generally given to the play is 1619, but any date before June 1623 is possible.

Since the play is not generally known and since it has not previously been evaluated in a discussion of the Ford canon, a detailed summary of the story will not be amiss. There are two strange laws in Candy (Crete); and thereby hangs a tale, though not a very good one. The first law declares that

Who e'r he be that can detect apparently  
 Another of ingratitude, for any  
 Received Benefit, the Plaintiff may  
 Require the offenders life; unless he please  
 Freely and willingly to grant remission.

(I.i.238)

In the first scene we are told that Gonzalo, a Venetian lord, has opposed his country's plans to conquer Candy. Once war was begun, he fled to Candy, which showed its gratitude by receiving him with adoration.

The second law states

. . . That what man so ere he were,  
 Did noblest in the field against his enemy,  
 So by the general voice approv'd, and known,  
 Might at his home-return, make his demand  
 For satisfaction, and reward.

(I.i.238-239)

It is this law which provides the initial conflict in the play. Both the general Cassilanes and his son Antinous performed valiantly in defeating the Venetians. Both are desirous of being honored as the warrior who fought most nobly in the battle. Cassilanes, a veteran of fifty years service for Candy, pleads with his son not "To rob me of a glory which I fought for/A half of hundred years" (I.ii.242). But Antinous will not yield. For his father he would give "My life, but not the prize/My Sword hath purchas'd" (I.ii.242). Before the senators and soldiers each recounts his deeds on the battlefield. All agree in awarding the honor to Antinous, and he makes his demand:

You set up in your Capitol in Brass  
 My father's statue, There to stand for ever  
 A monument and Trophy of his victories,  
 With this Inscription to succeeding ages,  
Great Cassilanes, Patron of Candy's Peace,  
Perpetual Triumpher.

(I.ii.248)

But Cassilanes is far from pleased:

. . . how this haughty boy  
 Grows cunning in his envy of mine honours:  
 He knows no mention can of me be made,  
 But that it ever likewise must be told,  
 How I by him was master'd; and for surety  
 That all succeeding times may so report it,  
 He would have my dishonour, and his Triumphs

Engrav'd in Brass: hence, hence proceeds the  
 falshood  
 Of his insinuating piety:  
 Thou art no child of mine: Thee and thy bloud,  
 Here in the Capitol, before the Senate,  
 I utterly renounce: So thrift and fate  
 Confirm me; henceforth never see my face,  
 Be as thou art, a villain to thy Father.

(I.ii.249)

He departs in a rage, leaving Antinous distraught: "I am  
 miserable/Beyond expression" (I.ii.250).

The romantic plot ties in at the beginning of the  
 second act. The princess Erota is very haughty. She thinks  
 no man good enough for her hand and is currently engaged in  
 saying so to Philander, the Prince of Cyprus, who is  
 passionately in love with her. Gonzalo, the Venetian,  
 also decides that he will win her. His banter with Erota  
 provides the best comedy in the play. He introduces himself  
 as a man who knows that

...unless  
 It be your self, no woman on the Universe deserves  
 him.  
 Nay, Lady, I must tell you too withal,  
 I may make doubt of that, unless you paint  
 With better judgement next day than on this;  
 For (plain I must be with you) 'tis a dull Fucus.

(II.i.253-254)

Erota bids her servant to give proper instructions to the  
 stranger from Venice:

You, tell him, if he have ought with us, let him  
 Look lower, and give it in Petition.

(II.i.254)

But Gonzalo fails to shrink before her haughtiness, and the battle of words is joined:

Gonzalo: I will not grace you  
 (Lady) so much as take you by the hand;  
 But when I shall vouch safe to touch  
           your lip,  
 It shall be through your Court a holy-day  
 Proclaimed for so high favour.  
 Erota: This is some  
 Great mans Jester: Sirrah, begon, here is  
 No place to fool in.  
 Gonzalo: Where are the fools you talk of?  
 I do keep two.  
 Erota: No question of it: for  
 In your self you do maintain an hundred.

(II.ii.254)

This is delightful bickering, but the pair of quarrelers are interrupted by Antinous. Seeing this young warrior for the first time, Erota finally falls in love with someone other than herself.

In the third act Gonzalo reveals to Fernando, a captured Venetian captain, his plot to betray Candy to Venice, Cassilanes angrily rejects his son's efforts at reconciliation, and Erota persuades Philander to plead her love to Antinous. This last scene is fairly well written:

Erota: I, that have lookt with scornful eyes  
   on thee,  
 And other Princes, mighty in their states,  
 And in their friends as fortunate, have  
   now pray'd,  
 In a petitionary kind almost,  
 This man, this well-deserving man,  
   (that I must say)  
 To look upon this beauty, yet you see  
 He casts his eyes rather upon the ground,  
 Than he will turn 'em this way; Philander,  
 You look pale; I'll talk no more.



Philander: Pray, go forward; I would be your Martyr,  
 To die thus, were immortally to live.  
 Erota: Will you go to him then, and speak for me?  
 You have loved longer, but not ferventer,  
 Know how to speak, for you have done it like  
 An Orator, even for your self; then how will  
 you for me  
 Whom you profess to love above your self.

(III.i.273)

Thus, Erota attempts to use her hapless lover, and to spur him on she makes an offer:

If a kiss will strengthen thee, I give you leave.  
 To challenge it, nay, I will give it you.

(III.i.274)

This is a staggering dramatic insight into the character of such a woman as Erota. The proud princess, never deigning to allow Philander to kiss her before, is now willing to give him a kiss so that he may be more forceful in carrying her suit to another. But even she cannot go this far; at last she becomes a woman:

Alas, it is a misery I grieve  
 To put you to, and I will suffer rather  
 In his tyranny than thou in mine.

(III.i.274)

But Philander does go to Antinous, and his speech is most gracious:

. . .you are my Lord,  
 (Indeed you are) for you command her heart  
 That commands mine; nor can you want to know it.  
 For look you, she that told it you in words,  
 Explains it now more passionately in tears;  
 Either thou hast no heart, or a marble one,  
 If those drops cannot melt it; prithee look up  
 And see how sorrow sits within her eyes,

And love the grief she goes with (if not her)  
 Of which thou art the Parent; and never yet  
 Was there (by Nature) that thing made so stony  
 But it would love what ever it begot.

(III.i.275)

But Antinous, still hurt by his father's rejection, remains unaffected.

Erota pleads her own case to Antinous in the next act. Their conversation leads to one of the finest brief poetic passages in the play. Antinous turns her away, saying, "For Love and Cares can never dwell together;" and Erota answers, "They should,/If thou hadst but my Love and I thy Cares" (IV.i.277). Decius then brings Antinous a tale of treachery. Fernando, having fallen in love with Annophel, the sister of Antinous, has betrayed Gonzalo's plots against the house of Cassilanes and against all Candy itself. Now Antinous has need of Erota, and if she will help him he promises to love her in return:

My Father stands for certain sums engag'd  
 To treacherous Gonzalo; and has morgag'd  
 The greatest part of his estate to him;  
 If you receive this Morgage, and procure  
 Aquittance from Gonzalo to my Father,  
 I am what you would have me be.

(IV.i.279)

Erota pretends to be in love with Gonzalo, who offers to kill the young king and set her on the throne: "There's but a boy 'twixt you and it; suppose him/Transhap'd into an Angel" (IV.i.281). He promises also that he shall overthrow the Duke of Venice and make her sovereign of that realm too.

Then Erotia tricks him into betraying himself:

We may be over-heard; Affairs and counsels  
Of such high nature, are not to be trusted  
Not to the Air it self, you shall in writing,  
Draw out the full design; which if effected,  
I am as I profess.

(IV.i.282)

Gonzalo approves her caution and writes out the proof of his guilt. As for the mortgage, she pays that herself.

The first law of Candy, involving death for ingratitude, is four times invoked in the final act. Before the Senate, presided over by Philander, Cassilanes accuses Antinous of ingratitude to his father:

That I begot him, gave him birth and life,  
And education, were, I must confess,  
But duties of a Father: I did more;  
I taught him how to manage Arms, to dare  
An Enemy; to court both death and dangers;  
Yet these were but additions to compleat  
A well accomplish'd Souldier: I did more yet.  
I made him chief Commander in the field  
Next to my self, and gave him the full prospect  
Of honour, and preferment; train'd him up  
In all perfections of a Martiallist:  
But he unmindful of his gratitude,  
You know with what contempt of my deserts,  
First kick'd against mine honour, scorned all  
My services; then got the palm of glory  
Unto himself; yet not content with this,  
He (lastly) hath conspir'd my death, and sought  
Means to engage me to this Lady's debt,  
Whose bounty all my whole estate could never  
Give satisfaction to:

(v.i.289)

Although he has never conspired against his father's life, Antinous admits that all the charges are true; the senators condemn him to death. But Erotia now must have her vengeance

on the man who has attacked her lover. Before Cassilanes and the Senate she says:

. . .wretched old man, thou hast liv'd too long  
 To carry peace or comfort to thy grave;  
 Thou art a man condemn'd: my Lords, this tyrant  
 Had perish'd but for me, I still suppli'd  
 His miserable wants; I sent his Daughter  
 Mony to buy him food; the bread he eat,  
 Was from my purse: when he (vain-gloriously)  
 To dive into the peoples hearts, had pawn'd  
 His birth-right, I redeem'd it, sent it to him,  
 And for requitall, only made my suite,  
 That he would please to receive his son  
 Into his favour, for whose love I told him  
 I had been still so friendly; but then he  
 As void of gratitude, as all good nature,  
 Distracted like a mad man, poasted hither  
 To pull this vengeance on himself, and us;  
 For why, my Lords, since by the Law, all means  
 Is blotted out of your commission,  
 As this hard hearted Father hath accus'd  
 Noble Antinous, his unblemished Son,  
 So I accuse this Father, and crave judgement.

(v.i.290-291)

Now Antinous accuses Erota of ingratitude to him:

When often in my discontents, the sway  
 Of her unruly bloud, her untam'd passion,  
 (Or name it as you list) had hour by hour  
 Solicited my love, she vow'd at last  
 She could not, would not live unless I granted  
 What she long sued for: I in tender pity,  
 To save a Lady of her birth from ruine,  
 Gave her her life, and promis'd to be hers:  
 Nor urg'd I ought from her, but secresie,  
 And then enjoyn'd her to supply such wants  
 As I perceiv'd my Fathers late engagements  
 Had made him subject to; what shall I heap up  
 Long repetitions? She to quit my pity,  
 Not only hath discover'd to my Father  
 What she hath promis'd to conceal, but also  
 Hath drawn my life into this fatal forfeit  
 For which since I must dye, I crave a like  
 Equality of justice against her;

(v.i.292)

We are not yet done, for Annophel now charges the Senate with ingratitude:

when your enemies  
 Came marching to your gates, your children suck'd not  
 Safe at their Mother's breasts, your very cloysters  
 Were not secure, your starting-holes of refuge,  
 Not free from danger, not your lives your own:  
 In this most desperate Ecstasie, my Father,  
 This aged man, not only undertook  
 To guard your lives, but did so; and beat off  
 The daring foe; for you he pawn'd his lands,  
 To pay your Souldiers, who without their pay  
 Refus'd to strike a blow: but, Lords, when peace  
 Was purchas'd for you, and victories brought home,  
 Where was your gratitude, who in your Coffers  
 Hoarded the rustic treasure which was due  
 To my unminded Father? he was glad  
 To live retir'd in want, in penurie,  
 Whilst you made feasts of surfeit, and forgot  
 Your debts to him: The sum of all is this,  
 You have been unthankful to him, and I crave  
 The rigor of the Law against you all.

(v.i.294)

Cassilanes, Erotas, and Antinous all second the charge. The senators rise from their seats of authority and leave Philander to decide the question of their guilt. Philander turns on Cassilanes and blames his "obdurate forwardness" and "proud ambition" for bringing ruin to Candy. Erotas, Decius, and even Arcanes, agree that Cassilanes has acted detestably. He admits the same, remits his offending son, and all is forgiven:

Cassilanes: . . .live, live, my matchless son,  
 Blest in thy Father's blessing; much  
 more blest  
 In thine own vertues: let me dew thy  
 cheeks  
 With my unmanly tears: Rise, I forgive  
 thee:

And good Antinous, if I shall be thy  
 Father  
 Forgive me: I can speak no more.

Antinous: Dear Sir,  
 You new beget me now--Madam your pardon,  
 I heartily remit you.

Erota: I as freely  
 Discharge thee Cassilanes.

Annophel: My gracious Lords,  
 Repute me not a blemish to my sex,  
 In that I strove to cure a desperate evil  
 With a more violent remedy: your lives,  
 Your honours are your own.

Philander: Then with consent  
 Be reconcil'd on all sides: Please you  
 Fathers  
 To take your places.

Possenne: Let us again ascend,  
 With joy and thankfulness to Heaven:  
 and now  
 To other business Lords.

(v.i.296)

This "other business" concerns Gonzalo, who conveniently enters at this moment only to be arrested for treason. The Venetian ambassador then arrives and asks Candy "Either to sentence him as he deserves/Here, or send him like a slave to Venice" (v.i.297).

It seems now that all will end happily in marriages: Annophel and Fernando and Erota with Antinous. But the play has one surprise left. Erota speaks--first to Antinous, then to Philander:

. . .my lord thou shalt be never:  
 I here disclaim the interest thou hadst once  
 In my too passionate thoughts. Most noble Prince,  
 If yet a relique of thy wonted flames  
 Live warm within thy bosom, then I blush not  
 To offer up the assurance of my faith,  
 To thee that hast deserv'd it best.

(v.i.298)

She gives Antinous her thanks: "For his neglect of me humbled a pride,/Which to a vertuous wife had been a monster" (v.i.298); but her love is now vowed to Philander. Antinous was never in love with her anyway, so all still ends happily.

The Laws of Candy is pleasant enough, and its poetry, despite a certain looseness, is on the whole graceful and pleasing. The attempts at humor are genuinely funny, but unfortunately, this is one of the faults of the piece. Most of the comedy revolves around Gonzalo, and he turns out to be the only real villain in the play. This mixture of humor and villainy seems indecorous.

The plot is of course exceedingly improbable. Yet it could be accepted if the major characters were a bit more humane. The chief traits of all three of the major figures--Antinous, Cassilanes, and Erota--seem to be pride and wilfullness; thus, it is difficult to really sympathize with any of them.

Several other plays in the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio were once thought by William Wells to show signs of Ford's authorship. In most of these cases, he seems to have changed his mind.

The Chances appeared in the Folio with a prologue which stated the play was Fletcher's and spoke of him as being dead. Wells thought that Ford had written the prologue and shortened Fletcher's original production; however, he subsequently stated that the play was wholly Fletcher's.<sup>11</sup>

This is the almost unanimous verdict of analysts, and no further association of Ford's name with The Chances has been presented.

Wells mentioned Ford in connection with The Sea-Voyage, but only in an impositive manner. He said merely that large portions of the play seem to be "in the style of Beaumont, Field, or Ford."<sup>12</sup> No more positive backing for Ford has been forthcoming.

It was also Wells who injected Ford's name into the controversy over the authorship of The Faithful Friends, saying it was "probably by Ford, or at least revised by him." Later he said the play was partly by Field, and did not mention Ford's name at all.<sup>13</sup>

Wells and Ford entered the lists again in debate over the division of Love's Pilgrimage. The historian declared the authors to be Beaumont and Fletcher, and perhaps Jonson--with Ford as the reviser of the original. In a later review of the play he eliminated Jonson and once again, after having first presented him, deserted Ford.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, Wells' support for Ford's authorship of these four plays is negligible, and the dramatist has no other backers. It is most improbable that John Ford had any share in the writing of The Chances, The Sea-Voyage, The Faithful Friends, or Love's Pilgrimage.

#### THE DUKE OF LERMA

The Duke of Lerma is the most recent addition to the



Ford apocrypha, its ascription to the dramatist being first made in 1940 by Alfred Harbage. The history of this play is very interesting.<sup>15</sup>

The Great Favourite, or The Duke of Lerma was supposedly written by Sir Robert Howard, the brother-in-law of John Dryden. It was produced at the Theatre Royal on Thursday, February 20, 1668, being graced by Nell Gwyn in the role of Maria, the King's mistress, and by the attendance of Charles II and his resplendent court. Samuel Pepys also saw the play opening night, being greatly worried by it; he thought "The play designed to reproach our King with his mistresses, that I was troubled for it, and expected it should be interrupted; but it ended all well, which solved all." Notwithstanding his anxiety, Pepys enjoyed the drama: he called "The play a well-writ and good play, only its design I did not like of reproaching the King, but altogether a very good and most serious play." He saw it again the following April 18.<sup>16</sup>

Pepys' contemporaries agreed that The Duke of Lerma was a good play, in fact, too good a play for Howard; they argued that it had been stolen. In The Sullen Lovers Thomas Shadwell hints that Howard stole the play<sup>17</sup>--and Dryden makes capital out of this suspicion in his Defence of An Essay of Dramatic Poesy. It will be remembered that the remainder of the title of this famous essay is Being an Answer to the Preface of the Great Favourite, or The Duke of Lerma. Dryden's

language is full of innuendo:

As for the play of The Duke of Lerma, having so much altered and beautified it as he /Howard/ has done, it can justly belong to none but him. Indeed they must be extreme ignorant, as well as envious, who would rob him of that honour; for you see him putting in his claim to it, even in the first two lines:

Repulse upon repulse, like waves thrown back,  
That slide to hang upon obdurate rocks.

After this, let detraction do its worst; for if this be not his, it deserves to be. For my part, I declare for distributive justice; and from this, and what follows, he certainly deserves those advantages, which he acknowledges to have received from the opinion of sober men.

In the next place, I must beg leave to observe his great address in courting the reader to his party. For, intending to assault all poets, both ancient and modern, he discovers not his whole design at once, but seems only to aim at me, and attacks me on my weakest side, my defence of verse.

To begin with me, he gives me the compellation of 'The Author of A Dramatic Essay'; which is a little discourse in dialogue, for the most part borrowed from the observations of others; therefore, that I may not be wanting to him in civility, I return his compliment by calling him, 'The Author of The Duke of Lerma.'<sup>18</sup>

Dryden is clearly making fun of Howard's claim to be considered the author of Lerma.

In the preface which provoked Dryden's ironical reply, Howard readily admitted that the play was not entirely his; but he insisted that most of it was his own conception:

For the Subject, I came accidentally to write upon it; for a Gentleman brought a Play to the King's Company, call'd, The Duke of Lerma; and by them I was desired to peruse it, and return my opinion, whether I thought it fit for the Stage:

After I had read it, I acquainted them, that in my Judgment it would not be of much Use for such a Design, since the Contrivance scarce would merit the name of a Plot; and some of that assisted by a Disguise; and it ended abruptly: and on the Person of Philip the III<sup>d</sup> there was fix'd such a mean character, and on the Daughter of the Duke of Lerma, such a vitious one, that I cou'd not but judge it unfit to be presented by any that had a Respect, not only to Princes, but indeed to either Man or Woman: and about that time, being to go into the Country, I was perswaded by Mr. Hart to make it my Diversion there, that so great a Hint might not be lost, as the Duke of Lerma saving himself in his last Extremity, by his unexpected Disguise, which is as well in the true Story as the old Play; and besides that and the Names, my altering the most part of the Characters, and the whole Design, made me uncapable to use much more; though perhaps written with higher Stile and Thoughts, than I cou'd attain to.<sup>19</sup>

Howard claims to have retained little more than the names and the incident of the Duke's escape from punishment by donning his cardinal's robes. His contemporaries evidently felt that he had kept much more than this. So does Harbage. His examination of this example of what he calls "Elizabethan-Restoration palimpsest" is extremely provocative.

Harbage believes that the play which Howard altered had been written before the civil war. This fact is more or less evident from the writer's own prefatory note to the printed play, for Howard says that the manuscript brought to him was an old play, meaning one written before the Interregnum. The Duke of Lerma or y<sup>e</sup>spanish Duke was one of the plays of the King's men which the Lord Chamberlain on August 7, 1641, warned were not to be printed without the company's consent. The fact that the King's men chose to protect it is evidence

that it had not outlived its usefulness to them. On September 9, 1653, at the Stationer's Register, Humphrey Moseley entered a play entitled The Spanish Duke of Lerma and three others which are now lost--The Duke of Guize, The Dumb Bawd and Giraldo, The Constant Lover--as the work of Henry Shirley, a Jacobean playwright.<sup>20</sup> That the play possessed by Moseley in 1653 is the same as that protected by the Lord Chamberlain for the King's men in 1641 is likely from its inclusion in a list of plays "formerly acted at the Blackfryers" which were allotted to Thomas Killigrew in January of 1669. In this catalogue the play is entitled The Duke of Lerma.<sup>21</sup> Thus, his Majesty's Servants at the Theatre Royal were officially given a play which quite possibly Howard had altered for them and they had performed less than a year earlier.

The task of identifying the pre-Restoration hand in the play is the really interesting part of the controversy concerning The Duke of Lerma. Moseley registered the play as "By Henry Shirley," but Harbage declines to accept this ascription. Shirley is known only by the four titles listed by Moseley and by one extant play, The Martyred Soldier, published in 1638, eleven years after Shirley's death. This play is all we have to estimate Shirley's dramatic abilities by. The Martyred Soldier deals with the fifth century persecutions of the African Catholics by the Vandals under Hunneric.<sup>22</sup> A. W. Ward, after calling it "a kind of latter-day

miracle-play," said, "It conveys the impression of a hand imperfectly trained to dramatic work."<sup>23</sup> Elsewhere, he termed it a "miracle play run to seed."<sup>24</sup> And Harbage finds it "a quaint religious drama, rudimentary in characterization and rude in style."<sup>25</sup> Howard admitted that the manuscript brought to him was "perhaps written with higher style and thoughts" than lay in his powers. Harbage argues that Howard would never have paid such a compliment to any work written by the same man who had authored The Martyred Soldier<sup>26</sup>--but this reading of Howard's mind, which assumes that he was familiar with The Martyred Soldier, is far too academic. Oliver suggests, without any real conviction, that The Martyred Soldier might have been an early play, whereas The Duke of Lerma positively came late in Shirley's career.<sup>27</sup> This could account for the difference in quality between the two, but the fact cannot be established.

Shirley was murdered in 1627. Harbage believes that the play gives knowledge of historical events of as late a date as 1629: "A hint in the last scene indicates that the playwright was aware that Maria Calderon bore Philip a son."<sup>28</sup> Philip's heir was born on April 17, 1629--however, as both Bentley and Oliver insist, Harbage is putting too strict an interpretation on Philip's words to Maria:

Spain's empty Throne,  
Unless from you, shall want succession.

Oliver states that these lines are merely a part of the King's

"proposal to Maria, who is in any case only a dramatist's rough equivalent for the actual mistress of Philip, who was an actress and not the daughter of the Duke of Lerma."<sup>29</sup>

And, as Harbage admits, these lines could have been added by Howard.<sup>30</sup>

The historical events dealt with in the play extend to 1624 at least. Since Harbage believed 1629 the more proper date, he maintained that only four dramatists, James Shirley, William Davenant, Philip Massinger, and John Ford were living at the time the play was written who were good enough to have received Howard's praise for "higher style and thoughts" than he was capable of. If the date is pushed back to 1624, then, says, Oliver, the list of available playwrights is larger. He names none, but Thomas Middleton, believed to have died in 1627, is the most obvious. But with either date, why should John Webster be excluded? That playwright was alive late in 1624, when Keep the Widow Waking was written; the date of his death is usually put merely as sometime before 1634, and such grim lines as

Alcara: These fainting fits seem as if she were  
With Child.

D'Alva: With Death I fear

could have been written by the author of The Duchess of Malfi --or, for that matter, by Cyril Tourneur, who died in 1626.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, in the preface to The Devil's Law Case, Webster mentions several of his plays, among them the now lost Guise, and one of the four plays attributed by Moseley to Henry

Shirley is The Duke of Guise. This is not to be construed as an attempt to establish a case for Webster as the author of Lerma but merely an expression of wonder at the severity of Harbage's limitations.

Of the four possible candidates Harbage eliminates Shirley and Davenant because they were still active in the theatre after the Restoration and would hardly have allowed a play of theirs to stray.<sup>32</sup> This seems correct--at least for Davenant, who was alive at the time Howard's play was published. I think the assumption will hold for Shirley, too--though he died in 1666, he was engaged in publishing his plays as late as 1665. However, there are many passages in Lerma which have parallels in Shirley's known work; and as Oliver points out, it would have been very easy for Moseley to confuse James Shirley with Henry Shirley.<sup>33</sup> So perhaps James Shirley should not be too casually dismissed from consideration. Massinger is simply ignored by Harbage, and we are left with John Ford.

Harbage thinks that the first speech of the play is sufficient to persuade us to say "Exit Howard and enter Ford":

Repulse upon repulse, like waves thrown back,  
That slide to hang upon obdurate rocks--  
The King shot ruin at me, and there lies  
Forgiving all the world but me alone,  
As if that Heaven too, as well as he,  
Had scratched me out of numbers. At the last  
He turned his feeble eyes away from me,  
As dying men from sins that had misled 'em,  
Blasting my hopes and theirs that hang upon me.

Thus all those mighty merits of my family  
 Are going to his grave, there to be buried.  
 And I myself have hung upon his frowns,  
 Like dew upon a cloud, till shaken off  
 In a cold shower and frozen as it fell,  
 Starving my growth with this untimely frost.  
 But I fondly prate away my thoughts,  
 Till I have made 'em nothing--like myself.  
 See--Here are the parts of my full ruin.  
 These decayed outhouses show the chief building  
 Wants reparation. . .<sup>34</sup>

"Exit Howard?"--perhaps so. But Ford's right to enter is hardly established here. The opening lines are dramatic enough to be by Ford, but the phrasing does not immediately suggest him. A few later phrases do vaguely have the sound of the Elizabethan poet: "Forgiving all the world but me alone," "Blasting my hopes and theirs that hang upon me," "I myself have hung upon his frowns"--but those are insufficient for such a conclusion as Harbage has made.

The remainder of his case is more weighty. He sees evidence of the poet's verse cadence, feeling that despite Howard's retouching, many of the lines "still sound with the chime of Ford's melancholy music."<sup>35</sup> He also notes examples of the poet's vocabulary and cites several parallel passages, insisting that "A case for Ford could be argued solely on the basis of verbal parallels--a remarkable fact considering that we have before us a sophisticated text."<sup>36</sup>

Support for Harbage was offered by G. F. Sensabaugh, who agreed that The Duke of Lerma contained "authentic accents" of Ford.<sup>37</sup> Concentrating upon the evidence of Burtonian melancholy and Henrietta Maria's codes of Platonic love found in



the play, the writer argued that "Ford's intense genius seems to glow through most of The Great Favourite, fusing Burton's medical realism and oblique court idealism to produce situations truly unique." He thinks that the play is beyond reasonable doubt a very slight recasting of an old play by John Ford.<sup>38</sup>

Concerning the Burtonian aspects of the plot, Sensabaugh quotes rather extensively but injudiciously. His best evidence concerns the effect of love on King Philip:

O what a traitor is my love  
That thus unthrones me! . . .  
. . . . .  
I see the errors that I would avoid  
And have my reason still, but not the use on't.

and Medina's hope of curing the King: he wises to

prescribe such wholesome medicines to you  
That should prevent this great distemper  
Growing on you and all the nation.<sup>39</sup>

Sensabaugh argues that the play illustrates three of the platonic codes of the court:

1. Beauty and goodness are one and the same.
2. Love is all-important and all-powerful.
3. Beauty in woman should be worshipped.

In connection with the first code, Sensabaugh's preformed opinion is that "Ford believed that sin and beauty could not live together" and he discovers that "so The Great Favourite's author thought also." The writer's thesis is, I think, fallacious, and I see no evidence that he has proved his point here. Citations marshalled for the second code are so weak that they deserve no comment. He illustrates the third

code with

Tell me, holy father, is it idolatry  
To pay devotion to those glorious eyes  
And call them lights divine? They are my stars,<sup>40</sup>  
Since their bright influence must direct my fate.

It is not impossible to conceive that lines by Ford could lie beneath these words--they remind one, for instance, of Giovanni's expression of love for his sister. But can the lines really be construed as being illustrative of Platonist doctrine? I think not: they seem rather too conventional for that conclusion to be warranted. And is Ford in The Duke of Lerma writing "like the master of passion and worship of beauty himself"? Again I think not.

Concerning Sensabaugh's efforts, Professor Davril has expressed considerable dissatisfaction, and Leech agrees with Davril that the case is weak. However, both scholars are inclined toward Harbage's view that the play is Ford's. Davril notes that the situations and the language of Lerma are typical of Ford and provides several examples to justify his conclusions.<sup>42</sup> Leech does not consider the question of authorship yet solved; but he thinks Ford could have written the original, and he suggests that in its initial form the play might have been very similar to Love's Sacrifice.<sup>43</sup>

The movement to instate The Duke of Lerma among Ford's work received a setback when Professor Oliver declared, "I have made a close study of The Duke of Lerma in an attempt to clinch the case for Ford but can only conclude that it

must stop far short even of probability." He finds the play to have as many parallels with James Shirley as with Ford, but he makes no attempt to build a case for Shirley. The possibility that the play was written by Henry Shirley and Ford in collaboration is mentioned offhandedly; this is conceivable but highly unlikely. He concludes that Harbage's case is far from proven.<sup>44</sup> The case is certainly far from proven; but the evidence for Ford's authorship bulks large, and it must be taken into consideration.

The parallels noted by the various analysts are interesting. First of all, "d'ee" occurs three times (II.i., IV.i., V.ii.)--and the fact that this contraction was altered to "d'ye" in the 1692 edition is, as Oliver says, perhaps significant.<sup>45</sup> Phrases beginning with "blast"--such as "blast my honour" (II.ii.) and "blasting my hopes (I.i.)--faintly suggest Ford.<sup>46</sup> Of more significance is the following passage:

. . .dost thou swell that art my creature?  
Thy breath is nurtured from my bounty:  
Why art thou then a traitor to my trust?

(III.iii.)

The words "creature" and "bounty" we have noted frequently before in our examination of Ford's collaborative work. And such phrases as "traitor to my trust" are common in his writings--in this same play occur "traitor to honour" and "traitor to friendship" (II.ii., III.iii., IV.i.), as well as "traitor to my prince's soul" (iv.i.).<sup>47</sup> Oliver's notice

of such similar expression in James Shirley as "treason to our friendship" in I.i. of The Traitor, and "a rebel twice to virtue" and "friend to goodness" in v.ii. of The Royal Master is interesting but does not negate arguments for Ford, who frequently uses abstract terms--goodness, friendship, honour, trust--in just this way, and Lerma has a heavy concentration of those phrases.<sup>48</sup>

The best of Harbage's parallels concern Ford's customary tendency to speak of weaknesses of the soul as infections and of lust as a leprosy. In The Duke of Lerma we read

. . .my infected fate  
Has driven these to seek more healthful airs.

(I.i.)

. . .Pride, the dropsy of infected souls  
That swelled 'em first, then burst 'em.

(II.i.)

'Tis pity forces me to this violence--  
The pity of my blood, I had a share in,  
Before it was infected with this leprosy. . .

(IV.i.)<sup>49</sup>

Occasional passages there are that sound like Ford's verse:

Her language would have played upon his soul  
And charmed him to a dotage.<sup>50</sup>

He talkt to me of nothing but of goodness,  
And when he spoke of that, (as he must needs)  
He named my mother, and by chance I wept.<sup>51</sup>

Each piece of evidence presented is slight in itself, but

together they form a rather substantial support for Ford. Oliver's caution may be approved by many--the case for Ford is not proven by any means. However, the case against Howard has been built rather solidly, and Ford now seems the most likely inheritor of The Duke of Lerma.

If Harbage's suppositions are correct, then much of the credit for the excellence of the play must go to Ford rather than to Howard. As we noted earlier, several historians of the Restoration theatre have voiced their surprise that Howard could have written such an interesting drama, for The Duke of Lerma is most atypical of his work. This is fully evident in the midst of their praise of the play. Allardyce Nicoll states that "the Machiavellian Duke of Lerma with his tool, Roderigo del Caldroon, the pure Maria with the complicated touches in her psychology, and the young king, make up a story that causes us to think more highly of Dryden's collaborator, enemy and friend, than his other works would have warranted."<sup>52</sup> Seven years after Nicoll, in 1935, the Reverend Montague Summers agreed that "Howard shows a genius, which to my mind informs the whole play, but which save for The Duke of Lerma might have been denied him."<sup>53</sup>

The editor of the play, D. D. Arundell, calls it "a model of adaptation,"<sup>54</sup> and praises the skill with which Howard rearranged the pages of history and turned them into one of the greater dramatic moments of the entire Restoration. The differences between the events of the reigns of Philip III

and Philip IV of Spain and the stage play are indeed considerable.

Philip III, pious but weak, became king of Spain in 1598, at the age of twenty. From the very first, the actual ruler of the country was the new king's great favourite, Don Francisco de Sandoval y Rojas, Marquis of Denia and Duke of Lerma. The dishonesty, extravagance, and wars of Lerma (among them the expedition to Ireland which was crushed by Ford's hero the Earl of Mountjoy) were too great even for the wealth of the Indies to support. While Spain suffered, Lerma and his accomplice Don Rodrigo de Calderon, Marquis de Siete Iglesias, amassed riches and possessions beyond compare. By 1605, at which time Lord Admiral Howard--the sacker of Cadiz, the conqueror of the Armada, and now the ambassador from England--was greeted at Valladolid with the greatest display of ostentation of which Lerma and Spain were capable, the country was utterly ruined.

Reaction was inevitable. It came first from Philip's queen, Margaret of Austria, who succeeded in eliminating Calderon: he was dismissed and languished for years in a dungeon until he was executed. Shortly after Calderon's dismissal the queen died in childbirth, but rumor declared that Lerma's poisons had been the instruments of her death. Thereafter, Lerma's own son, the Duke of Uceda, encouraged by Aliaga, the king's confessor, plotted his father's fall. In 1618 their plans succeeded: Lerma, who only shortly

before had been made a cardinal by Pope Paul V, was banished from the court and Uceda became the favorite in his father's stead.

Uceda did not last long. The mentor of the young Prince Philip, Gaspar de Guzman, Count of Olivares, encouraged the boy's hatred of Uceda and all the house of Sandoval y Rojas. The old king sickened in March, 1621--and Uceda, trying desperately to preserve himself, persuaded the dying man to recall Lerma. Hearing of this, the Guzmans, now desperate themselves, advised Prince Philip to assume royal power and countermand his father's decree--this was done, Lerma being forced to return to Valldolid.

The king died on March 31, 1621. The new king and the Guzmans acted swiftly. Within mere days Calderon's head rolled on the scaffold at Madrid, and Aliaga was exiled. Uceda was disgraced and died a prisoner. Lerma fought to protect the wealth he had plundered from his country, but the avengers crushed him and his house. Lerma died in 1625.

These political events provide the background for most of the play. The remainder deals with Philip's romances. In 1627, Philip IV, a devotee of the theatre, met the actress Maria Calderon in Madrid. La Calderona became his mistress and was the mother of his heir. Don Juan Jose of Austria, who was legitimatized in 1642.<sup>55</sup>

This is the historical panorama which had to be reduced to the strict confines of the stage. Arundell

obviously feels that his subject succeeded nobly; he says that Howard's adaptation "of the original story is not only brilliant in the matter of selection, omission, and addition, but is daringly successful in its novel untragic seriousness."<sup>56</sup> As the play now stands, it does represent an excellent compression and rearrangement of several years of Spanish history.

The play begins as Philip III lies on his death bed. Lerma, though he has been banished from the court, has secretly reentered the palace and is contriving, with the help of Roderigo del Caldroon and the Confessor (Aliaga), to regain his estate and authority. After the death of the old king, Lerma paves the way for his return to power by poisoning his bitter enemy the Queen-Mother (Margaret of Austria) and by scheming to have his young and beautiful daughter Maria accepted as the young king's mistress. However, all does not proceed as the Duke has planned. His daughter, valiantly striving to uphold her own honor and that of her country, betrays her father to his enemy the Duke of Medina. Justice comes swiftly. The Confessor takes his own life; Caldroon is executed summarily; and Lerma is commanded before the Council, which is to decide his fate. But the Duke does not answer his summons as a suppliant for mercy; instead he appears gowned in his cardinal's robes and sweeps through the room, while his helpless enemies, impotent before the red signs of his authority, dare not touch a prince of the Church.



Though Lerma leaves in safety, his attempt to regain power has been crushed, and Maria is celebrated by Philip IV and his court as the saviouress of their country. As the play ends, Philip persuades her to share his throne.<sup>57</sup>

The plot is excellent. One of the most advantageous strokes the adaptor has made is to unify Maria Calderon and the Duke of Uceda in the character of Maria. By thus eliminating Uceda and by allying Aliaga with Lerma (rather than, as in history, with his son), the playwright has been able to reduce the jealous court parties from three to two. The most memorable scene is undoubtedly Lerma's flaunting of the Council; of the Duke's triumph in defeat Summers says, "There are few more effective scenes than when he appears not as a suppliant or guilty, but in all the pomp of pontifical state, clad in his sweeping scarlet robes, My Lord Cardinal, a sovran prince, whose sacred person the Grandees dare not touch nor molest. Baffled, they can but snarl and gnash their teeth as with serene front and matchless dignity he passes from their presence to a safe retreat and secure retirement."<sup>58</sup>

Of all commentators on the play, only the Reverend Mynors Bright, a Victorian editor of Pepys, has expressed dissatisfaction: "It is too dull to reprint; and the merit must have consisted more in the manner in which it was delivered, than in the matter, as it came from the pen of the author."<sup>59</sup> Bright's criticism is hardly authoritative. Nicoll approves the play and compliments the psychological

depth in Maria; Summers admits that he greatly admires the work; and Arundell, calling it "the first attempt at drama of character" since the Elizabethan era, rates it "higher than any other serious play of the period."<sup>60</sup> Oliver says simply that the play is "well worth reading."<sup>61</sup>

The Duke of Lerma, the critics agree, is far above the level of Sir Robert Howard's six other works for the stage. One thing seems obvious: Howard owes a great debt to some Elizabethan playwright. At the moment his creditor seems most likely to be John Ford.

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup>E. H. C. Oliphant, The Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher (New Haven, 1927), p. 474.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 481.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 485 (cited by Oliphant from private correspondence with Lloyd).

<sup>4</sup>Gerald Eades Bentley, The Jacobean and Caroline Stage (Oxford, 1941), III, 355-356.

<sup>5</sup>Hoy's study, "The Shares of Fletcher and his Collaborators in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon," which I have not seen, is in Studies in Bibliography for 1960.

<sup>6</sup>Oliphant, Beaumont and Fletcher, pp. 478-479.

<sup>7</sup>The citations from The Laws of Candy are given as they appear in Oliphant. The page numbers which I have provided in parentheses refer to The Works of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1906), III.

<sup>8</sup>Oliphant, Beaumont and Fletcher, pp. 478-479.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted by Arthur Brown in The Year's Work in English Studies, XXXVII (1956), 149-150.

<sup>10</sup>This and all subsequent citations from The Laws of Candy refer to the edition of A. R. Waller--see note 7 above. Internal references are to act, scene, and page numbers of the third volume.

<sup>11</sup>Oliphant, Beaumont and Fletcher, p. 137.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 249.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 355.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 432-433.

<sup>15</sup>See Alfred Harbage, "Elizabethan-Restoration Palimpsest," Modern Language Review (July, 1940), XXXV, 287-319 (only 297-304 pertain).

<sup>16</sup>The Diary of Samuel Pepys, ed. Henry B. Wheatley (London, 1923), VII, 309, 376.

<sup>17</sup>Reverend Montague Summers, The Playhouse of Pepys (London, 1935), p. 267.

<sup>18</sup>Essays of John Dryden, ed. W. P. Ker (Oxford, 1900), pp. 111-112.

<sup>19</sup>H. J. C. Oliver, The Problem of John Ford (Carlton, Victoria, 1955), pp. 131-132.

<sup>20</sup>Bentley, V, 1058-1062.

<sup>21</sup>Allardyce Nicoll, A History of Restoration Drama, 1660-1700 (London, 1928), p. 316.

<sup>22</sup>Arthur Melville Clark, Thomas Heywood (Oxford, 1931), p. 295. Clark thinks a very small portion of the play is by Heywood.

<sup>23</sup>A. W. Ward, A History of English Dramatic Literature (London, 1899), III, 157.

<sup>24</sup>Quoted in Clark, p. 295.

<sup>25</sup>Harbage, p. 299.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Oliver, p. 138.

<sup>28</sup>Harbage, p. 299.

<sup>29</sup>Oliver, p. 133; cf. Bentley, V, 1064.

<sup>30</sup>Harbage, p. 299.

<sup>31</sup>Oliver, p. 137.

<sup>32</sup>Harbage, pp. 299-300.

<sup>33</sup>Oliver, p. 138.

<sup>34</sup>Harbage, p. 302.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 303.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 302.

<sup>37</sup>G. F. Sensabaugh, "Another Play by John Ford," Modern Language Quarterly, III (December, 1942), p. 595.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., pp. 600-601.

- 39 Ibid., p. 597.
- 40 Ibid., p. 598.
- 41 Ibid., p. 600.
- 42 Robert Davril, Le Drame de John Ford (Paris, 1954), pp. 519-522.
- 43 Clifford Leech, John Ford and The Drama of His Time (London, 1957), pp. 81-84.
- 44 Oliver, p. 135.
- 45 Harbage, p. 302; Oliver, p. 134.
- 46 Davril, p. 520.
- 47 Harbage, p. 302.
- 48 Oliver, pp. 136-137.
- 49 Harbage, pp. 302-303.
- 50 Sensabaugh, p. 600.
- 51 Harbage, p. 303.
- 52 Nicoll, pp. 127-128.
- 53 Summers, p. 178.
- 54 Ibid., p. 177.
- 55 Ibid., pp. 176-177; Louis Bertrand and Sir Charles Petrie, The History of Spain, 711-1931 (New York, 1934), pp. 364-365, 368-369; Martin Hume, The Court of Philip IV: Spain in Decadence (London, 1907), pp. 1-41.
- 56 Summers, p. 178.
- 57 My summary is based on Summers, p. 177.
- 58 Summers, p. 177.
- 59 Wheatley, p. 309.
- 60 Summers, p. 267.
- 61 Oliver, p. 139.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE INDEPENDENT PLAYS OF JOHN FORD

Before turning to Ford's independent dramatic work a few general critical considerations need to be examined. John Ford is usually considered the greatest of the English playwrights whose major works appeared in the two decades before war closed the theatres. Yet, history has not been kind to his memory; the eighteenth century forgot him entirely; the nineteenth was ashamed of him, and only in the last three decades has the twentieth broken away from the inertia of mistake begun by its predecessor. Ford has been at a great disadvantage in his battle with time, for the dominant note in the criticism of his work has been founded on error--an entire century, failing to understand his purposes in art, damned him with the title of "high priest of decadence."

In the condemnation of Ford the title involves two major considerations: both moral and artistic decadence. To many readers it has seemed that Ford lacked moral character and the ability to distinguish between good and evil: the poet's preoccupation with beautiful women and themes of illicit passion, his seeming defense of lovers whatever their crimes against the moral order, his seeming approval of the liberties of Platonic love, and his searching inquiries

into areas of life which others thought best left unquestioned convinced a multitude of readers that the man had a twisted, demonic sense of ethical judgment. On this score no one is quite so interesting to read as a Victorian lady by the name of Violet Paget:

The sight of evil fascinates him; his conscience staggers, his sympathies are bedraggled in foulness; in the chaos of good and evil he loses his reckoning, and recognizes the superiority only of strength of passion, of passion for good or evil. . . .

There is for. . . Ford no fatality save the evil nature of man, no justice save the doubling of crime, no compensation save revenge: there is for. . . Ford. . . no heaven above, wrathful but placable; there are no Gods revengeful but just: there is nothing but this blood-stained and corpse-strewn earth, defiled by lust-burnt and death-hungering men, felling each other down and trampling on one another blindly in the eternal darkness which surrounds them.<sup>2</sup>

Some critics believe that as an artist Ford also transgressed greatly. They have insisted that he willfully abandoned the sound dramatic principles of the golden age of Elizabethan theatre, that he exploited spectacle and sensation for the mere sake of the thrill, and that he sank to depths of innuendo and vulgarity unknown elsewhere in the drama. Because of misapprehension in critical concentration on these elements, the reputation of John Ford as man and artist has suffered for more than two hundred and fifty years.

Many disparate influences had effects on Ford's art. An ideal of honor was one. A belief in the beauty of earthly love and an abiding sympathy for those unable to enjoy this

blessing was another. A third was literary, Robert Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy, published in 1621. This strange compendium of science and ignorance was a vital part of Ford's independent work for the stage; it gave new force, added purpose to his art. Melancholy claimed to be the discoverer of the immutable laws which ruled the lives and behavior of men, and it was accepted as such by the century.<sup>3</sup> In an age, then, when the study of melancholy was accepted as a science, there was no greater scientific observer in the drama than John Ford.

Examination of the importance of melancholy to the poet's work is a rather recent facet in the criticism of Ford, and it has established itself as an indispensable element in the study of the independent dramatic works. It helps to dispel some old misunderstandings concerning the plays--and it justifies such a seeming paradox as "it is not incest but love with which the playwright is concerned" in his great tragedy 'Tis Pity She's a Whore.<sup>4</sup> The demonstration that the hero of this play is a victim of melancholy presents a conception of his character and of Ford's attitudes toward the character that has been too long unrealized. In a sense it is true that Ford "found his distinctive field in the stage-presentation of melancholy,"<sup>5</sup> and the full significance of the statement was not known to many of the nineteenth century detractors of his work.

There is another explanation for the nature of Ford's



subjects. The poet was writing at the end of a long dramatic tradition. This has its advantages for a writer with wisdom enough to learn from the successes and mistakes of his predecessors; but it also has its disadvantages too: the range of subject matter can be worked only so many times until the audiences will take it no more. In his search for themes Ford went far afield, to the very frontiers of morality and of art, to present the world positive studies of problems which many dared not consider even in passing: he wrote of "the conflict between the world's opinion and the heart's desire."<sup>6</sup> He went also to spectacle and sensation.

As far as these artistic faults are concerned--and insofar as they are faults--they are primarily the faults of his age. Ford does depend heavily on spectacular and sensational action. His greatest play, The Broken Heart, contains them all: dance, music both vocal and instrumental, mechanical stage properties, and blood flowing in clear sight of the audience. In this regard the play is merely typical of the drama of the age.

The English theatre had never lacked spectacle and sensation, but with Ford and his contemporaries they were necessary rather than simply useful. Audiences sated with a half-century of certain kinds of dramatic shocks, demanded new ones, stronger ones. The public wished to be thrilled rather than simply horrified, and it desired novelty: a solution unforeseen, a disaster unpresaged. The playwrights complied.

Then, too, by Ford's time the stage had been weakened by religious attack. Puritanism estranged those of the God-fearing and serious-minded in whom faith and seriousness were not tempered by other vital values. The audience remaining was more frivolous and had a larger appetite for dramatic pleasures than the earlier playgoing public had had. For the most part Ford's audience had narrowed to the court circle and the habitues of the Blackfriars theatre. To please this new constituency Ford had to resort to stronger, more unusual stimulants than those used with success before.<sup>7</sup> So did the other playwrights of the period. In this regard, The Broken Heart was merely a typical Blackfriars production in its sensation and ingenious use of spectacle.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the nature of the audience partially defends Ford's failure in comedy, too. No part of his work has been so universally decried as his attempts at humor. Low and indecorous they all too frequently are, but this was the kind of humor the age preferred. That Ford was aware that his chief talents did not lie in comedy is evident from his prologues. In the address to the audience preceding The Lover's Melancholy, he tells his hearers:

Yet you will please, that as you meet with strains  
Of lighter mixture, but to cast your eye  
Rather upon the main than on the bye,

that is, on the main serious plot rather than on the comic substructure. And in the prologues to Perkin Warbeck and The Broken Heart he announces his intention not to cater to

the tastes of his public; before the former play he writes:

nor is here  
Unnecessary mirth forc'd to endear  
A multitude. . .

He was aware of his limitations as a writer of comedy, but low humor was a concession he sometimes felt compelled to make to those on whom the success of his plays depended.

For his failings in comedy he has been severely condemned. William Gifford led the way in attacking Ford's comic characters<sup>9</sup>--and the poet himself has been called "the worst jester who ever lived."<sup>10</sup> We have admitted that Ford is not an eminently successful writer of comedy, but these comments slander his attempts at humor far too much. The comedy of The Queen is bad, that of The Fancies Chaste and Noble is extremely low; but the humor of Love's Sacrifice succeeds notably, and that of The Lady's Trial and other plays is at times genuinely entertaining.

The one aspect of the dramatist's art which almost all critics have been willing to praise and praise highly is his poetry. Several of Ford's plays have structural weaknesses and they give evidence of the poet's all too frequent disregard for the niceties of plotting--but their poetry is almost always uniformly good. Charles Lamb judged Ford to be "of the first order of Poets."<sup>11</sup> This is high commendation, but it is deserved. His verse has sometimes been called "Shakespearean,"<sup>12</sup> but it is not really like Shakespeare's. Ford's poetry is not a language of

vibrant imagery and flashing metaphor. His verse is less ornamental, more quiet, more subdued. The words are, in fact, the words of prose--but the effect of those words is pure poetry. It was perhaps these characteristics which prompted William Singleton, "the friend and kinsman" of Philip Massinger, to wish of Ford

that the age  
May be indebted to thee for reprieve  
Of purer language.....<sup>13</sup>

Ford is quite frequently rated the second finest poet of the Elizabethan stage--the position second to Shakespeare is not too high an honor for his reputation to sustain: "Ford, as dramatic poet, as writer of dramatic blank verse, has one quality which assures him of a higher place than even Beaumont and Fletcher; and that is a quality which any poet may envy him. The varieties of cadence and tone in blank verse are none too many, in the history of English verse, and Ford. . .was able to manipulate sequences of words in blank verse in a manner which is quite his own."<sup>14</sup>

It is in tragedy that Ford succeeds most notably. His themes are new, and his purposes have been too long misunderstood--but these factors have never blinded even the most disparaging of his critics to the real power and beauty of his tragic pictures of life. Love is his tragic subject, and his plays concentrate on the clash of lovers against the rules and mores of the social order. In tragedy Ford is unique, in that his art probes the problem of the human

heart lost in a situation which imperils not only the body but also the soul. After Webster there is no one to equal him in tragedy.

By the time Ford began his dramatic career, the genre of the history play was obsolete. Yet, in his only attempt to do so, Ford revived the form with striking success. Except for a few of Shakespeare's works, and perhaps one play by Marlowe, the whole of the Elizabethan drama offers no greater example of the history play than Ford's Perkin Warbeck.

Between 1628 and 1638 Ford published seven of his plays. One other play has confidently been ascribed to him by scholarship. Of these eight plays six have considerable worth and are on the whole very successful. The other two are on the whole failures--yet there are portions in both that rise far above the dross of much of the late Jacobean and Caroline drama. It has been objected that Ford is a very limited artist. This is true only in the sense that he largely restricted himself to probing the problems of the hearts of lovers; he is limited in that there is little variety of theme in his work. But of his six greatest independent plays three are tragedies, two are comedies or tragicomedies, and one is the best history play of the Jacobean and Caroline ages. In the extent of his successes he is far from being a limited writer. Six successes in eight attempts is a fine average for any playwright. It is time now to look at the

first of his plays.

### THE LOVER'S MELANCHOLY

The Lover's Melancholy is generally considered Ford's first independent work for the stage. It was licensed by Sir Henry Herbert on November 24, 1628, and was acted either on that date or shortly thereafter by the King's men before a private audience at the Blackfriars. The title page also refers to public performances at the Globe by the same company.

Ford gave the play to the printers in 1629, the date of the entry in the Stationer's Register being June 2. No doubt the piece had enjoyed considerable popularity with contemporary audiences; the multiple performances and the fact that Ford allowed the play to be published is indicative of this. It was evidently the first of Ford's independent plays to be printed, for in the dedication he speaks of "this piece being the first that ever courted reader" (4).<sup>15</sup>

The Lover's Melancholy has courted readers well. Even though the play has seldom been acted since its own time, it has been popular with readers of the old drama ever since 1808, when Charles Lamb called attention to it in his Specimens of English Dramatic Poets. Lamb included a portion of the play in his collection, and sections of it have frequently appeared in other anthologies of Elizabethan verse. The Lover's Melancholy richly deserves the popularity it has received.

This comedy has been granted a great deal of attention by modern critics because it is the Ford play most obviously dependent upon one of the chief influences on the dramatist's work, The Anatomy of Melancholy of Robert Burton. For the details of Palador's melancholy, Ford is indebted to Burton, and for his "Masque of Melancholy" in Act III the poet even provided marginal notes referring to the work of Democritus Junior (Burton). This dependence upon that strange work in seventeenth century studies of the mind has gained The Lover's Melancholy considerably more critical attention than it would otherwise have received, though its poetry alone is enough to insure that the piece would never have been neglected.

The plot is very simple and may be rapidly summarized. The young and beautiful Eroclea was brought to court to be the bride of Prince Palador; but his father, King Admetus, desired her and attempted to force his affections upon the young girl. To protect her virtue, her uncle Sophronus took her away by stealth and kept her safe until the death of Admetus.

In the meantime Sophronos sent his own son, Menaphon, away from the court to remove him from the presence of Princess Thamasta, whom he loved too passionately. In the course of his travels Menaphon met Eroclea disguised as a boy (Parthenophil), and failing to recognize her, persuaded the youth to become his attendant and return with him to Cyprus. As they return to the court of Palador, the play opens.

Palador has fallen into melancholic unhappiness and is neglecting the state in his grief for Eroclea. The shock of her loss has also caused the mind of her father, Meleander, to wander; and he is being cared for by his other daughter, Cleophila, who is loved by Amethus. The return of Eroclea would in itself be enough to cure Palador and Meleander if they knew of it, but Eroclea, improbably enough, must remain in her disguise for four acts. This produces the first complication in the plot, for both Thamasta and her maid Kala fall in love with the disguised Eroclea. As Thamasta pleads her love, Eroclea tries desperately to discourage her and finally has to divulge the secret of her sex in order to do so. Soon afterwards, they are interrupted by Menaphon, who takes it much unkindly that his attendant is alone with the woman he loves. Before any violence can occur, all are called away to court to witness the evening's entertainment, a masque.

Corax, the court physician, attempts to cure Palador of his melancholy by representing several forms of the disease in a masque. All forms but one are shown:

One kind of Melancholy  
Is only left untouch'd: 'twas not in art  
To personate the shadow of that fancy;  
'Tis named Love-Melancholy.

(III.i.68)<sup>16</sup>

Palador dismisses himself and leaves hastily. But he has been touched--as Sophronos tells Corax: "thou art a perfect arts-man" (III.i.69).



Later Thamasta, shocked by her folly with Parthenophil, attempts a reconciliation with Menaphon. At first he thinks she is insincere and refuses her offers; but soon afterwards they are reconciled. In the same scene Amethus and Cleophila pledge their devotion to each other.

Subsequently we see the effect of the masque on Palador. The prince is greatly troubled, for Corax's show had puzzled him--and the face of Parthenophil has puzzled him even more. As he talks to himself, Eroclea, dressed now as a woman, enters behind him. At first when he sees her he cannot believe his eyes, but then he realizes that his sight is not playing tricks on him and says: "Come home, home to my heart, thou banish'd peace" (IV.iii.87).

The task which remains is to cure Meleander of his grief, and in this the whole court unites. The sight of his daughter is all Meleander needs to enable him to regain his senses. After this the lovers are all united: Palador bestows Thamasta on Menaphon, Cleophila on Amethus, and takes Eroclea as his own. Then the prince leads the entire courtly train

On to the temple! there all solemn rites  
Perform'd, a general feast shall be proclaim'd.  
The LOVER'S MELANCHOLY hath found cure;  
Sorrows are chang'd to bride-songs. So they thrive  
Whom fate in spite of storms hath kept alive.

(V.i.105)

Now, as always, Ford is concerned with love and its effects on man and woman. There are three sets of lovers--Palador and Eroclea, Menaphon and Thamasta, and Amethus and

Cleophila. The reuniting of the first pair of lovers is the central problem in the play: on it all other incidents are dependent; the situations involving the other lovers provides an interesting contrast in the character and temperament of the women concerned.

In drawing Palador Ford kept Burton's Anatomy well in mind. After Eroclea's disappearance, the prince fell into melancholy. Now he still moves lethargically and in his grief for lost love is pleased by nothing; he

. . . sometimes speaks sense,  
But seldom mirth; will smile but seldom laugh;  
Will lend an ear to business, deal in none;  
Gaze upon revels, antic fopperies,  
But is not mov'd; will sparingly discourse,  
Hear music; but what he most takes delight in  
Are handsome pictures.

(I.1.12)

Burton mentions the pleasure that young men often take in looking at pictures of beauty. This is so because love enters through the eyes of the beholder.<sup>17</sup> Palador takes delight in "handsome pictures," and he wears a miniature portrait of Eroclea around his neck.

One of the remedies for love melancholy, according to Burton, is exercise.<sup>18</sup> Corax has prescribed exercise for Palador and is horrified to find his patient reading a book instead:

A book! is this the early exercise  
I did prescribe? instead of following health,  
Which all men covet, you pursue disease.

Where's your great horse, your hounds, your set  
                   at tennis,  
 Your baloon-ball, the practice of your dancing,  
 Your casting of the sledge, or learning how  
 To toss a pike? all chang'd into a sonnet!

(II.i.31)

But the best cure is to "let them have their desire"<sup>19</sup>--  
 and the prince is immediately made well when Eroclea comes  
 to him.

Palador and Eroclea have only one scene together: it  
 is an exceptionally poetical and appealing one. A servant  
 tells the prince that a woman who looks exactly like  
 Parthenophil has been found. Palador thinks this is  
 Parthenophil in disguise as a woman, and he is shocked and  
 hurt by the youth's likeness to Eroclea:

Cunning impostor!  
 Untruth hath made thee subtle in thy trade.  
 . . . . .  
 Hast thou assum'd a shape that would make treason  
 A piety, guilt pardonable, bloodshed  
 As holy as the sacrifice of peace.

(IV.iii.84-85)

Eroclea protests that she is who she seems to be, but Palador  
 must have proof of this: "Come, to trial; if thou beest/  
 Eroclea, in my bosom I can find thee" (IV.iii.86). He  
 compares her face with that on the miniature which he wears  
 above his heart' and in return Eroclea shows him his own  
 portrait, which she has carried with her in her long travels,

. . . the only physic  
 My solitary cares have hourly took,  
 To keep me from despair.

(IV.iii.86)

Now Palador knows that Eroclea has returned, and the lover's melancholy is cured--he has his desire.

Thamasta is a less admirable woman than either Eroclea or Cleophila. Thamasta has scorned Menaphon, even though her brother, Amethus, has pleaded for him. Amethus has told her that "She who derives her blood from princes ought/To glorify her greatness by humility" (I.iii.25), but this postulate is rejected by the princess: "My freedom is my birth's" (I.iii.25), she says. Then we receive our first clue concerning the object of Thamasta's desires:

I have given  
Your Menaphon a welcome home, as fits me;  
For his sake entertain'd Parthenophil,  
The handsome stranger, more familiarly  
Than I may fear, become me; yet for his part,  
I not repent my courtesies. . .

(I.iii.25-26)

No, she does not repent her courtesies to Parthenophil. A short while later she confesses to her maid Kala that she has fallen in love with Parthenophil, and even at the cost of her honor she must have a meeting alone with that youth--one must "cure love with love," she says as she sends Kala to arrange a rendezvous. Thamasta is making no very concerted attempt to curb her passion.

When she hears from Parthenophil's own lips that Kala has spoken for herself rather than for her mistress, Thamasta rages at her waiting-woman:

Art thou a rival fit to cross my fate?  
 Now poverty and a dishonest fame,  
 The waiting-woman's wages, by thy payment,  
 False, faithless, wanton beast! I'll spoil your  
     carriage;  
 There's not a page, a groom, nay, not a citizen,  
 That shall be cast away upon ye, Kala;  
 I'll keep thee in my service all thy lifetime,  
 Without hope of a husband or a suitor.

(II.1.41-42)

Thamasta, allowing her "fate" to push her on unopposed, is, like Giovanni, in grave danger of going too far. She does indeed arrange her tryst with Parthenophil, but she is saved from pursuing her own destruction by the fact that Parthenophil reveals her true sex to her. The princess is stunned beyond belief by the fact that this youth she has pursued so violently is of her own sex. This severe blow to her pride teaches her the humility which was sadly lacking in her character before, and she is saved from allowing passion to lead her to a loss of honour.

Meleander warns his daughter Cleophila to be suspicious of Amethus, for he is related to the king who tried to force his affections on Eroclea. Cleophila answers, "I am, alas, too griev'd to think of love;/That must concern me least" (II.ii.44). It is, of course, her father's illness which most occupies her now; at this moment she has no time for love. This is what she tells Amethus when he pleads for her favor:

Amethus:     . . .give me leave to follow  
                   The stream of my affections: they are pure,  
                   Without all mixture of un noble thoughts.  
                   Can you be ever mine?

Cleophila: I am so low  
 In mine own fortunes and my father's woes,  
 That I want words to tell ye you deserve  
 A worthier choice.

Amethus: But give me leave to hope.

Cleophila: . . . . .  
 Sir, this for answer. If I ever thrive  
 In any earthly happiness, the next  
 To my good father's wish'd recovery  
 Must be my thankfulness to your great  
 merit,  
 Which I dare promise: for the present time  
 You cannot urge more from me.

Amethus: . . . . .  
 Sweet maid, forget me not, we now must  
 part.

Cleophila: Still you shall have my prayer.

(II.ii.47-48)

Love has its own poetry of diplomacy, and in that language Cleophila has just admitted her affection for her suitor. But there is no selfishness in this young woman. Before she will allow herself to consider love, she must first see her father back, if possible, to health.

Yet she is a woman. She cannot help thinking of Amethus and his love, and it has been hard for her to turn her lover away. As the possibility of her father's recovery increases, her heart leaps with the hopes that she may soon know the realization of all her desires:

So many fears, so many joys encounter  
 My doubtful expectations, that I waver  
 Between the resolution of my hopes  
 And my obedience: 'Tis not--O my fate!--  
 The apprehension of a timely blessing  
 In pleasure shakes my weakness; but the danger  
 Of a mistaken duty that confines  
 The limits of my reason. Let me live,  
 Virtue, to thee as chaste as truth to time!

(V.i.89)

Cleophila is a far more sensible young woman than Thamasta. She does not allow her love to destroy her reason, and she does not allow her desires to tempt her away from honor. To give her peace of mind, Ford does not have to impose so shocking a cure for passion as he did for Thamasta.

It is fully evident from our brief summary of the play and rapid glances at a few scenes that the plot is highly improbable. There seems to be no reason why Eroclea should remain in disguise once she reaches the court and learns of the suffering of her father and the prince. Nor is there any reason why Sophronos--"A good, good brother (V.i.105)--could not have told Meleander that his daughter was alive and well. But once these initial situations are accepted, the play is most enjoyable. Actually the improbabilities of the plot do not harm the play, for the story is conducted with exceptional artistry and in the final analysis The Lover's Melancholy is an eminently beautiful and successful romance.

The finest scene in the play is the last, in which Meleander is cured through the combined efforts of the court. First Corax drugs him to sleep, and he and Rhetias, the servant of Eroclea, see the old man through the metamorphosis created by the barber and the tailor--thus the outside of the man is transformed. As soon as Meleander wakes, Palador aids his mental recovery by making him Marshall of Cyprus and granting him other offices. Then Sophronos brings him a





have been frequently praised by other writers also. The Victorian scholar W. J. Courthope, the successor to Matthew Arnold in the Chair of Poetry at Oxford, wrote: "An admirable delicacy of conception, a fine discrimination of all shades of feeling, above all a lofty and pathetic style, distinguish his representation of the melancholy of the prince, of the madness of Meleander, of the discovery of her real sex by Eroclea to Thamasta."<sup>22</sup> And among the more modern critics we see Emile Legouis stating that The Lover's Melancholy "is attractive because of its delicate handling of emotions and the graces of its style."<sup>23</sup>

Since these two aspects of the play have been referred to so frequently, it would be well to look more closely at them. Ford's treatment of emotions is evident in the scene in which Meleander sees first the portrait of his daughter and then Eroclea herself. We might also note the scene mentioned by Courthope in which Eroclea reveals herself as a woman to Thamasta. At the beginning of this fine scene, Thamasta sends her maid from the room so that she and Parthenophil may be alone; this in itself is a danger and the order shows the extent of her passion:

I expose  
 The honour of my birth, my fame, my youth,  
 To hazard of much hard construction,  
 In seeking an adventure of a parley,  
 So private, with a stranger: if your thoughts  
 Censure me not with mercy, you may soon  
 Conceive I have laid by that modesty  
 Which should preserve a virtuous name unstain'd.

(III.iii.56)

Parthenophil answers that the princess's virtues are so well-known that she can have no question of her honorable intents; to do so "Would argue me uncivil; which is more,/Base-bred; and, which is most of all, unthankful" (III.iii.57).

Naturally enough, Thamasta does not immediately come to the point; instead she speaks of "a secret/Of sympathy" between the myrtle and the olive, of ivy twining around the oak. But none of this circumlocution is wasted on Parthenophil:

Great lady, 'twere a dulness must exceed  
The grossest and most sottish kind of ignorance  
Not to be sensible of your intents;  
I clearly understand them. Yet so much  
The difference between that height and lowness  
Which doth distinguish our unequal fortunes  
Dissuades me from ambition, that I am  
Humbler in my desires than love's own power  
Can any way raise up.

(III.ii.57)

Thamasta understands that this is a rejection of sorts and her pride is wounded. Hurt, she falls back on her rank:

I am a princess,  
And know no law of slavery; to sue  
Yet be denied!

(III.ii.58)

In turn Parthenophil builds her defense upon the sanctity of her friendship with Menaphon; she begins with an echo of the princess's words:

I am so much a subject  
To every law of noble honesty,  
That to transgress the vows of perfect friendship  
I hold a sacrilege as foul and curs'd  
As if some holy temple had been robb'd,  
And I the thief.

(III.ii.58)

Parthenophil continues to plead for Menaphon in reply to the lady's haughtiness. Her words have effect on Thamasta and the proud princess becomes instead a humble woman:

Thou hast a moving eloquence, Parthenophil!--  
 Parthenophil, in vain we strive to cross  
 The destiny that guides us. My great heart  
 Is stoop'd so much beneath that wonted pride  
 That first disguis'd it, that I now prefer  
 A miserable life with thee before  
 All other earthly comforts.

(III.ii.59)

Thamasta presses her suit and as a last resort Parthenophil is forced to reveal her stunning secret:

Lady, take a secret.  
 I am as you are--in a lower rank,  
 Else of the self-same sex--a maid, a virgin.

(III.ii.60)

All Thamasta can say now is, "Pray, conceal/The errors of my passion" (III.ii.60)--a service which Parthenophil vows she shall always do. Gifford has paid tribute to the excellence of the scene: "This scene, at once dignified and pathetic, is happily conceived, delicately conducted, and beautifully written. It places Ford's powers of language and command of feeling in a very eminent rank."<sup>24</sup> Here again it is Ford's control of emotional situations and his poetic language that have pleased his editor most.

Concerning this scene Oliver has some very interesting comments:

. . .the difference between Ford's use of the conventional story of the woman in disguise and Shakespeare's becomes apparent. Shakespeare is

more or less content to use it, in Twelfth Night and As You Like It, as a convention, for its plot interest and its comic possibilities. Ford explores the situation for its psychological interest and is not afraid to investigate psychological abnormality if necessary. There is surely more real passion in this scene in The Lover's Melancholy than in the whole of Twelfth Night. . . Ford does bring out what such a mistaken affection can mean to the person deceived; it is Shakespeare, in comparison, who is merely "pretty."<sup>25</sup>

The aspect of the poetry of The Lover's Melancholy which has most impressed readers is undoubtedly the pathos which seems almost inherent in his slow, dignified, melancholy verse. Perhaps the most frequently quoted lines in the play are those in which Prince Palador wonders at the effect Parthenophil's face has had on him. There was something vaguely familiar, something faintly upsetting too, in the countenance of that strange youth--and now Parthenophil has disappeared and the prince shall never know the mystery behind that face:

Parthenophil is lost, and I would see him;  
For he is like to something I remember  
A great while since, a long, long time ago.

(IV.iii.83)

One of the typical characteristics of Ford's language is musical imagery. Palador uses such imagery a few lines later to express his unhappiness:

The music  
Of man's fair composition best accords  
When 'tis in consort, not in single strains:  
My heart has been untun'd these many months,  
Wanting her presence, in whose equal love  
True harmony consisted.

(IV.iii.83-84)

While he has been engaged in this revery, Eroclea has entered behind him. She answers his speech with another that is very typical of Ford, a speech which expresses man's weariness after days of troubles and unrest:

Minutes are number'd by the fall of sands,  
 As by an hourglass; the span of time  
 Doth waste us to our graves, and we look on it:  
 An age of pleasures, revell'd out, comes home  
 At last, and ends in sorrow; but the life,  
 Weary of riot, numbers every sand,  
 Wailing in sighs, until the last drop down;  
 So to conclude calamity in rest.

(IV.iii.84)

Both Ford and the metaphysical poet Richard Crashaw adapted Strada's famed exercise on the rivalry between a musician and a nightingale. There may have been some close connection between the two English poets, for John Ford is the only contemporary dramatist to whom Crashaw ever refers. At any rate Ford's version of the contest is one of the most famous passages in all his works. This is the passage from the play which Lamb selected for his anthology, and it has frequently graced other similar collections. Although it is long, I give Ford's version of the contention here.

In The Lover's Melancholy Menaphon, as he is relating the account of his travels to Amethus, tells the story of how he first encountered Parthenophil and thereby became a witness to the strange contest between a skilled musician and nature's best songstress:

I day by day frequented silent groves  
 And solitary walks. One morning early  
 This accident encounter'd me: I heard  
 The sweetest and most ravishing contention  
 That art and nature ever were at strife in,

. . . . .  
 A sound of music touch'd mine ears, or  
 rather

Indeed entranc'd my soul. As I stole nearer,  
 Invited by the melody, I saw

This youth, this fair-fac'd youth, upon his  
 lute,

With strains of strange variety and harmony,  
 Proclaiming, as it seem'd, so bold a  
 challenge

To the dear quiristers of the woods, the  
 birds,

That, as they flock'd about him, all stood  
 silent,

Wondering at what they heard. I wonder'd too.

Amethus: And so do I; good, on!

Menaphon: A nightingale,

Nature's best-skill'd musician, undertakes  
 The challenge, and for every several strain  
 The well-shap'd youth could touch, she sung  
 her own;

He could not run division with more art  
 Upon his quaking instrument than she,  
 The nightingale, did with her various notes  
 Reply to: for a voice and for a sound,  
 Amethus, 'tis much easier to believe  
 That such they were than hope to hear again.

. . . . .  
 . . . they were rivals and their mistress,  
 harmony.--

Some time thus spent, the young man grew  
 at last

Into a pretty anger, that a bird,  
 Whom art had never taught cliffs, moods,  
 or notes,

Should vie with him for mastery, whose study  
 Had busied many hours to perfect practice:

To end the controversy, in a rapture  
 Upon his instrument he plays so swiftly,  
 So many voluntaries and so quick,  
 That there was curiosity and cunning,  
 Concord in discord, lines of differing method  
 Meeting in one full centre of delight.

Amethus: Now for the bird.



rather than lyrical purpose.<sup>28</sup>

Thus there is much to admire in The Lover's Melancholy, even if George Saintsbury did not think so. Saintsbury declared that except for the fancy of the nightingale "it is naught."<sup>29</sup> This is a ridiculous error in judgment. Somewhat more worthy of consideration is the commentary of his contemporary, A. W. Ward, who stated that even though "the pathos seems to well up from the very depths of human nature, and though its sentiment is better guarded from the danger of passing into mere sentimentality than might from the opening have seemed likely, this work is to be regarded as one of high promise rather than of matured excellence."<sup>30</sup>

One element of the play--the comedy involving Cuculus and Pelias--has been decried by almost all authorities. Gifford was less vitriolic than usual where Ford's comedy was concerned, but he thought this delicate play "debased..by abortive attempts at humour."<sup>31</sup> John Genest, the historian of the English stage, noted simply that "the comic characters ...have not much to recommend them."<sup>32</sup> Other commentators have been less kind: Schelling said, "the low comedy. . .is beneath contempt";<sup>33</sup> and Leech spoke of Cuculus as exemplary of Ford's "customary absurdity."<sup>34</sup>

It must be admitted that the comic parts of the play are not very successful but to slander Ford's efforts as Schelling has done is totally unfair. The worst thing that can be said for the comic characters is that their nonsense



jars the ear which has become accustomed to the beautiful pathos and skillful dialogue of the serious scenes. However, there is something quite human--and humorous, too--in

Rhetias: Thou art no scholar?

Pelias: I have read pamphlets dedicated to me.--

(I.ii.19)

### THE QUEEN

The Queen, or The Excellency of her Sex was not published until 1653, when it was printed by Alexander Gough, a former actor of female roles at the Blackfriars, where he had played a part in The Lover's Melancholy. Gough should have had some familiarity with Ford's work, but he was evidently ignorant of the author of the play he published; the title-page did not bear the name of any playwright, and in the dedication Gough called the play an "Orphan." In 1656 Edward Archer listed the play as by John Fletcher in his "Exact and Perfect CATALOGUE of all the PLAIES that were ever printed." This ascription has never been repeated by any authority. Greg thinks that "Fletcher's name has crept in from another entry." There is no evidence to indicate that Fletcher wrote such a work, and Archer's attribution has been fully rejected.<sup>35</sup>

Nothing is known of the history of the play before it came into the hands of its printer. On the title-page Gough says simply that the play was "Found out by a Person of Honour, and given to the Publisher." In the early fifties

Gough printed three other plays: The Widow and The Passionate Lovers I and II. All of these were the property of the King's company, whose name appeared on the title-page of all three. It might be assumed that The Queen also belonged to the King's men; however, the title-page lacks the name of the company, and this omission may indicate that it was not one of their plays.<sup>36</sup>

The Queen received very little attention until it was edited in 1906 by Professor Willi Bang, who confidently attributed it to Ford. Bang's conclusion was based solely on internal stylistic evidence; but it was approved by Stuart Sherman, the chief American authority on the poet. Sherman emphasized that such things as the highly artificial character of the plot, the peculiar cadence of the lines, the elevated language, the use of hyperbole, and the low humor in the prose sections were all sufficiently indicative of Ford to render the supporting evidence of vocabulary studies and parallel passages superfluous.<sup>37</sup> This dictum did not prevent H. D. Sykes from gathering such evidence. After expressing his desire to "respectfully demur" with Sherman,<sup>38</sup> he proceeded to produce several pages of vocabulary studies and parallel passages which strengthened the case for Ford. The accumulated evidence in support of Ford is most convincing and Bang's original attribution has never been seriously questioned. A brief look at some of this evidence will be to the point.

Bang pointed out a good many parallels between certain words and passages in The Queen and in plays known to be by Ford. Some of these are of no value whatsoever--for instance his directions to compare "What say?" (3664)<sup>39</sup> with "What say? why d'ye not speak" in 'Tis Pity. However, many of his findings are very significant. Earlier, in the discussion of The Welsh Ambassador we noted Ford's fondness for the word "assendant," as used there in "Queene of the assendant." In The Queen, Pynto, an astromer, says, "The moon is now Lady of the ascendant. . ." (352), and later in the same scene he states that "Venus is Lady of the Ascendant, man" (489). As support for his contention of Ford's authorship, Bang cited this parallel from The Broken Heart:

Young Ithocles,  
Or ever I mistake, is lord ascendant  
Of her devotions

(IV.ii.295)<sup>40</sup>

Such parallels are extremely interesting and suggestive. So is the following. In The Queen Ford says, "I have a debt to pay, 'tis nature's due" (323); "the death I owe to Nature" (1183); and "quit the score we owe to nature" (3289). For comparisons Bang cited the lines "They must have paid the debt they ow'd to nature" from The Broken Heart (V.2.312) and "should your grace now pay. . .the debt you owe to nature" from Love's Sacrifice (I.i.14).<sup>41</sup>

One other parallel is convincing too:

the tyde  
 Of thy luxurious blood is at the full;  
 And cause thy raging plurisie of lust  
 Cannot be sated by our royal warmth,  
 Thou tri'st all cunning petulent charms  
 to raise  
 A wanton devill up in our chast brest.

(1185-1192)

To this we may compare 'Tis Pity:

Must your hot itch and plurisy of lust,  
 The heyday of your luxury, be fed  
 Up to a surfeit,

(IV.iii.177)

and The Fancies Chaste and Noble:

But that some remnant of an honest sense  
 Ebbs a full tide of blood to shame, all women  
 Would prostitute all honour to the luxury  
 Of ease and titles.

(I.iii.239)<sup>42</sup>

In his essay on the authorship of The Queen Sykes repeated several of Bang's parallels and added a few new ones: the best of these concerns fate. At the end of the play Velasco says:

To strive against the ordinance of fate  
 I find is all in vain:

(3853-3855)

and this is a thought that is most frequent with Ford:

No toil can shun the violence of fate

(LS: IV.ii.88)

. . . in vain we strive to cross  
 The destiny that guides us.

(LM: III.ii.59)

Being driven  
By fate, it were in vain to strive with heaven.<sup>43</sup>

(PW: V.i.201)

Sykes also made a vocabulary study, finding that of the fifteen most distinctive common words in Ford's vocabulary, only two--"nimble" and "partake"--were absent from The Queen. Among the others "crave" and "fate" appear five times each; and "bosom," "bounty," "chronicle" and "penance" occur four times. Only once is "sift" used: "You dare not sife the honor of my faith" (1418-1419)--but this is exactly Ford's customary way of employing the word:

So shall we sift her love and his opinion.

(FCN: III.ii.271)

. . .I have us'd a woman's skill to sift  
The constancy of your protested love;

(LM: IV.i.71)<sup>44</sup>

All of this evidence indicates that Ford was the author. No signs of any other playwright have been detected, and the play has been confidently ascribed to Ford.

No evidence has been found which would help to date the play with any accuracy. Bang merely suggested that the style would place its composition near the dates of the tragedies, which are also unknown.

The Queen is one of the few plays for which Ford is believed to have used source material. In An Account of the English Dramatick Poets (1691) Gerard Langbaine noted that part of the plot of The Queen was based upon the

Histoire Tragique (tome 1, Novel 13) of Belleforest.<sup>45</sup>

A summary of the action of The Queen will be of value for several reasons. It will show the structural framework of the play and manifest its excellences and weaknesses in plot, characterization, and language. It will also illustrate the overtones of Othello which are frequent and will evince the Burtonian formula which Ford is once again employing: Alphonso, suffering from mental affliction, is, like Palador, a patient; Muretto, like Corax, is a physician; the Queen, like Eroclea, is a cure.

In looking at the opening situation of The Queen, it might be well to keep in mind Bang's statement connecting this play with The Broken Heart: "Fordes Ansicht lernen wir aus dem Munde der jungen Konigin Calantha. . .kennen";

Now tell me, you whose loyalties pay tribute  
To us your lawful sovereign, how unskilful  
Your duties or obedience is to render  
Subjection to the sceptre of a virgin,  
Who have ever been fortunate in princes  
Of masculine and stirring composition.  
A woman has enough to govern wisely  
Her own demeanours, passions, and divisions.  
A nation warlike and inur'd to practice  
Of policy and labour cannot brook  
A feminine authority: we therefore  
Command your counsel, how you may advise us  
In choosing of a husband, whose abilities  
Can better guide this kingdom.

(V.iii.316)

Bang says, "Es sieht so aus, als waren diese Verse ein Anzeichen dafür, dass Forde mit dem Gedanken The Queene zu Dichten umging, als der letzte Hand an The Broken Heart legte."<sup>46</sup>

Alphonso has led a revolt against the Queen of Arragon, but he has been defeated by the loyal General Velasco. As the play opens three of Alphonso's followers have just been pardoned by the Queen, but their fierce general is still under sentence of death. At the very last moment the Queen arrives and halts the execution. She asks Alphonso whether he has repented and he replies:

. . .I am not sorry,  
 Nay more, will not be sorry, know from me  
 I hate your sex in general, not you  
 As y'are a Queen, but as y'are a woman  
 Had I a term of life could last for ever,  
 And you could grant it, yes, and would, yet all  
 Or more should never reconcile my heart  
 To any she alive--are ye resolved?

(382-393)

Although her counsellor Almado advises her against pardoning "one so wholly drown'd/In melancholy and sowre discontent" (446-448), the queen not only forgives Alphonso's offenses, she marries him and makes him King of Arragon. Alphonso is pleased to be a king but far from pleased to be a husband, for as he tells his bride: "y'are still a woman" (659-660). Therefore, he needs some time to think things over,

. . .to redeem a while some serious thoughts  
 Which have misdeem'd your sex. You'll be content  
 To be a married Batchelor one sennight.

(674-678)

The sennight lengthens to a fortnight, then to a month, and finally the Queen must needs go to her husband and plead for his consideration:

Wherein my gracious Lord have I offended?  
 Wherein have I transgressed against thy laws  
 Of sacred Marriage. To be sequestered  
 In the first spring and April of my joys  
 From you, much dearer to me, than my life?  
 By all the honour of a spotless bed,  
 Show me my fault and I will turn away,  
 And be my own swift executioner.

(1132-1142)

But Alphonso's answer is violently unkind:

Pish, I know  
 She would be well contented but to live  
 Within my presence; not for love to me,  
 But that she might with safety of her honour,  
 Mix with some hot vein'd lecher, whose prone lust  
 Should feed the rank impostume of desires,  
 And get a race of bastards, to whose birth  
 I should be thought the Dad. But thou, thou woman,  
 E're I will be the cloak to thy false play,  
 I'll couple with a witch, a hag; for if  
 Thou canst live chaste, live by they sel like me.  
 Of if thou wouldst perswade me that thou lov'st me,  
 See me no more, never. From this time forth  
 I hate thy sex; of all thy sex, thee worst.

(1214-1236)

Thus far the story has been strange and weak, but tolerable. Now it goes from bad to worse. The Queen's advisor, Collummello, declares that her loyal subjects will correct her wrongs, and she answers all too harshly:

Away, ye are all Traytors to profane  
 His sacred merits with your bitter terms.  
 . . . . .  
 Get from me Lords, I will defie ye all,  
 Y'are men, and men (O me) are all unkinde.

(1248-1250, 1272-1273)

And she engages in sensibility, sentimentality of the worst kind. To her servant she says:



. . . Herophil, let's hast  
 That thou and I may heartily like widows  
 Bewail my bridal mockt Virginity.

(1223-1226)

After this it is difficult to have the sympathy for the Queen that is necessary for a dramatic heroine.

Even in The Queen Ford was writing with his characteristic subtlety, and it is only at a second reading that this subtlety becomes fully evident. When the Queen comes to Alphonso in this scene, he first accuses her of not loving him. This makes her think their month-long separation merely a test of her faithfulness, and she answers: "We women are fine fools/To search mens pretty subtleties" (1169-1170). But Muretto, the henchman of the king, will not allow her to play innocent; in an aside to Alphonso he murmurs: "You'll scarce find it so" (1171), and the king's next words are evidently meant as an aside too: "She would perswade me strangely" (1172-1173). Alphonso is beginning to feel the force of her beauty and her protestations of love, but Muretto is poisoning his mind against his wife. Immediately, the king shouts his accusation that she is filled with "a raging plurisie of lust" (1188). When near the end of this scene the Queen says of her husband: "yet sure I fear/He hath some ground for his displeasure" (1290-1291), she is not wrong--that "ground" consists of the lies Muretto has been telling him.

In the third act Muretto's lies continue. Just as

Iago most incensed Othello by vague hints and by what seemed to be attempts to defend Desdemona, so Muretto goads Alphonso into a fury by the same methods:

Muretto: And at her passing to her private lodgings, attended onely with her lady in ordinary. Petruchi alone went in before her.

Alphonso: Is't true! Went in before her! Canst prove that?

Muretto: Your majesty is too quick, too apprehensive of the worst: I meant he perform'd the office of an Usher.

(1646-1654)

Muretto: I think now a woman may lie four or five nights together with a man, and yet be chaste; though that be very hard, yet so long as 'tis possible, such a thing may be.

(1671-1675)

By "far reaching policy" (1590) Alphonso begins to act. He pretends that all is well between the Queen and himself. He calls her to him and she comes. He calls Petruchi also, sending him a large diamond ring as a sign of his good will. Since the ring was sent from her husband, the Queen demands Petruchi to give it to her. This is unfortunate for the ring corresponds to the handkerchief in Othello.

When the Queen comes before Alphonso, all at first seems well; but she, like Desdemona, cannot refrain from saying the wrong thing:

Queen: I would your words  
Dissented not from your resolved thoughts

For then (if I mistake not) you would feel  
 Extremity of passion, which indeed  
 Is noble jealousy.

Alphonso: Are you so plain?

(2150-2157)

Then he notices the ring on her finger; and taking this as a sign of her guilt, sends Petruchi in chains to prison and informs his wife of her fate:

If in a moneth a Champion shall appear,  
 In single opposition to maintain  
 Your honor; I will be the man my self  
 In person to avouch this accusation:  
 And which of us prevails, shall end this strife.  
 But if none come, then you shall lose your head.

(2239-2246)

There is one surprise turn of events left in the act. Before the Queen departs, she speaks to her loyal followers:

. . .As you ever bore respect or truth  
 To me as to your Sovereign, I conjure ye  
 Never to levy arms against the King,  
 Singly or openly, and never else  
 To justifie my right or wronge in this.  
 For if you do, here I proclaim ye all  
 Traytors to loyalty and me: for surety,  
 I crave your oaths. . .

(2269-2277)

Collumello and Almado swear the required oath; but once the Queen is gone, they issue a proclamation offering one hundred thousand ducats to any knight who will be their lady's champion.

Even at the price of her life, the Queen will not allow anyone to oppose her husband--such is the force of her love. But this kind of love is hardly affecting. It was

such scenes as this that prompted one critic to say the Queen "out-Grissils Griselda."<sup>47</sup>

In the next act we see Alphonso the misogynist weaken--and, strangely, Muretto changes his tone too:

Alphonso: O I am lost Muretto. . . .

. . . .  
. . . my judgement  
Still prompts my senses, that my Queen  
is fair.

. . . .  
I have surveyed the wonder of her cheeks,  
Compar'd them with the lillies and the rose  
And by my life, Muretto, Roses are  
Adulterate to her blush, and lillies pale.  
Examin'd with her white; yet, blear eyed  
fool,

Muretto: I could not see those rarities before me.  
Every man is blind (my lord) in his own  
happiness, there's the curse of our  
mortality.

She was the very tale of the world:  
Her perfections busied all tongues  
She was the onely wish of Europes chiefest  
Monarchs.

Whose full fruition you (and 'twas your  
capital sin)  
most inhumanly abandoned.

(2389,2394-2397,2407-2425)

This is rapid transition in Muretto. The reader may be pardoned his bewilderment.

The Queen and Petruchi now enter separately and plead their innocence, but Alphonso abuses both by repeating his charges that they are adulterers. Petruchi answers furiously in his own defense, and once again the Queen plays Griselda:

Petruchi, in those words thou dost condemn  
Thy loyalty to me, I shall disclaim  
All good opinion of thy worth or truth,  
If thou persevere to affront my lord.

(2622-2626)

After she and Petruchi leave, Alphonso is miserable. He feels now the force of love; he greatly desires his beautiful queen. And yet he believes her guilty of betraying his bed, and he will not bear that ignominy of cuckoldry without exacting vengeance. He exits in a quandary: "To leave her [is] death, to live with her is shame" (2675-2676). Muretto is left alone on the stage to close the scene; his soliloquy now reveals that he is no Iago after all:

Fare ye well King, this is admirable, I will be chronicled, all my business ripens to my wishes. And if honest intentions thrive so successfully; I will henceforth build upon this assurance, that there can hardly be a greater Hell or Damnation, then in being a Villane upon earth.

(2677-2684)

Alphonso leads the Queen to the scaffold at the beginning of the last act. He bids the herald sound the trumpet to call forth any champions to fight in her defense. Another trumpet answers and Velasco enters in response to the summons. Although the Queen rails at him and calls him a traitor, Velasco is determined to fight. But before he and Alphonso can cross swords, another trumpet sounds and another armed knight enters to defend the Queen. When this knight is revealed to be the prisoner Petruchi, Alphonso finally realizes that he has been duped: "I am plainly bought & sold, why wher's Muretto?" (3547-3548). At this Muretto enters and announces that he is ready to champion the Queen also. The shocked Alphonso rages at him, blaming him for

creating the suspicion of his queen in the first place. Muretto admits that his charges were lies; then he explains his reasons for slandering the Queen:

I saw with what violence he pursude his resolutions not more in detestation of the Queen in particular, then of all her sex in generall. . . I bent all my Studies to devise, which way I might do service to my country, by reclayming the distraction of his discontents. And having felt his disposition in every pulse, I found him most addicted to this pestilence of jealousy with a strong persuasion of which; I from time to time, ever fed him by degrees, till I brought the Queen and the noble Petruchi into the dangers they yet stand in. But with all (and herin I appeale to your Majesties own approbation) I season'd my words with such an intermixing the praises of the Queen's bewty, that from jealousy I drew the King into a serious examination of her perfections.

(3583-3605)

Thus, Muretto, part Iago, is also part Corax; and his prescriptions work as successfully as those of the physician of The Lover's Melancholy. Alphonso is cured of his hatred and distrust of the queen:

Lay by your arms, my lords, and joyn with me.  
Let's kneel to this (what shall I call her?) Woman?  
No, she's an Angel?

(3640-3644)<sup>48</sup>

The Queen reaffirms her own love for him, and all is well between the royal lovers.

The opinions of two early critics of the play will give us some grounds to work on in discussing the shortcomings of the characters. The first is Sykes':

The Queen of Arragon, who out-Grissils Griselda in patience and wifely obedience is but little better than a lay figure, a colourless image of perfections incapable of rousing more than a tepid interest in her sorrows, while the King is equally remote from the semblance of humanity--a morose monomaniac whose base ingratitude towards the Queen and readiness to put the worst construction on her actions, not all Ford's lofty eloquence can render tolerable or plausible.<sup>49</sup>

Sherman also did not approve of Alphonso: "The hero is a thing of shreds and patches"--but he did like Alphonso's wife: "The great character of the play is undoubtedly the Queen. . .we can scarcely refuse our admiration to the lofty ardor and intensity of her passion. It is unnatural, but it is heroic."<sup>50</sup>

Heroic it may be in a futile, ungrateful kind of way. Sykes' view of the queen has to be qualified, but he is closer to the truth than Sherman. Self-pity may succeed in drama--Pentheia gets away with it completely--but it does not succeed with the Queen. For her to wail in self-pity and then to insult those subjects who would risk their lives to save her is not going to win our sympathy. She is, among other things, a traitor to gratitude. She is not "The great character of the play."

From where came so great a love? This is the most disconcerting question in The Queen. In The Lover's Melancholy, Eroclea and Palador do not meet until the end of the fourth act--yet we understand how each can love the other, we feel that the dramatist has indicated sufficient reasons

for Palador's melancholy and Eroclea's sadness, and we sympathize with the unhappy lovers. The Queen and Alphonso meet in the opening act and every act thereafter--yet we never understand how she can love such a man as Alphonso and we do not really sympathize with her sorrows. So great a love, so great a self-sacrifice demand more motivation than the playwright has given, and the lack of it ruins his drama.

From where came so great a hate? We are not told the causes for Alphonso's loathing of the Queen and of her sex which is already fully developed in the opening act. He says he could not stand idle and allow his country to be ruined by a woman's rule, but the faults of the Queen's government are never shown and her other subjects love and respect her. Alphonso seems more a habitual malcontent than a patriot. Thus, when his feelings for his wife begin to change, the alteration is unconvincing. Again it is this lack of motivation which weakens characterization and renders it impossible to sympathize with (or merely to understand) Alphonso. Ford began his play too far toward the end. A scene or two of background and exposition and delineation of character would have made a world of difference.

Muretto is less vulnerable to criticism, yet the transition in his character between the third and fourth acts is bewildering. And one also must wonder at the efficacy of the cure imposed by this "physician"--he came



close to ruining his patient before curing him.

The romantic subplot provides yet another picture of suffering lovers. Velasco, the general who defeated Alphonso's revolutionaries, is conquered himself by Salassa, a poor but beautiful widow, in whose house he had been entertained during the fighting. The scene between them which ends Act II is rather interesting, and many of Ford's typical comments on love appear here. Salassa admits that she loves Velasco, and such is his passion that in return for one kiss he promises to obey any demand she places upon him. Her demand is a hard one for a general to obey:

For two years space, you shall not wear a sword,  
A dagger, or stelletto; shall not fight  
On any quarrel be it neer so just.

(1489-1492)

Even if he is "Rail'd at, scorn'd, mock'd, struck, baffi'd, kick'd" or "Spit on, revil'd, challeng'd, provoked by fools,/Boyes, anticks, cowards" (1495-1496, 1498-1500), he must not fight. All this, says the haughty widow, must be his proof of love:

'Tis common  
T'observe how love hath made a Coward valiant;  
But that a man as daring as Velasco,  
Should to express his duty to a Mistris,  
Kneel to his own disgraces, and turn Coward,  
Belongs to me and to my glories onely;  
I'm Empress of this miracle.

(1512-1520)

In succeeding scenes Velasco is attacked both verbally and physically by fools and cowards, yet his oath binds his

hands. It is rumored everywhere that he has lost his courage. Under this disgrace, he begins to hate Salassa.

However, we are about to see another side of Salassa's character. When the proclamation offering huge payments to a champion for the Queen is announced, Salassa volunteers Velasco's services and offers her own life as a forfeit if he does not fight. To Lodovico, a friend of Velasco who has been berating her for her cruelties to the general, she explains the reasons for her actions:

Why, Sir, I was not worthy of my lords love  
before; I was too poor: but now two hundred  
thousand ducats, is a dower fit for a lord.

(2705-2708)

She frees Velasco from his oath, saying, "I meant all but for a tryal in jest" (2780). But Velasco will not fight for her. He departs in a fury, leaving her to face her fate and to weep for a love that is even stronger now that the object of it is gone:

thou art a noble man,  
Compos'd of Goodnes, what a foole was I?  
It grieves me more to loose him then to die.

(2893-2896)

The Senate requires her death, and Velasco watches from hiding as she walks to her execution, for "I looke for Comfort in't" (3099-3100). But when Salassa ascends the scaffold her speech is so full of humility and penitence that Velasco is touched and stops the execution. He saves her from the ax, but that is the extent of his favor to her:

Base woman, take thy life, thy cursed life,  
 I set thee free, and for it pawn a soul:  
 But that I know heaven hath more store of mercy,  
 Then thou and all thy sex of sin and falsehood.

(3220-3226)

So now we have two misogynists in the play. But Velasco cannot be left this way anymore than Alphonso can. At the end after the king and queen are reconciled, Salassa bears the bags of gold--"the price of guilt/Of shame, of horror" (3792-3794)--before Velasco and lays them at his feet with these words:

Your looks proclaim  
 My sentence banishment, or if you think  
 The word of banishment too hard to utter.  
 But turn away, my lord, and without accent  
 I'll understand my doom, I'll take my leave,  
 And like a penitentiary walk  
 Many miles hence to a religious shrine.  
 Of some chaste sainted Nun, and wash my sin of  
 In tears of penance, to my last of breath.

(3801-3814)

Velasco turns away but Alphonso, the queen, and even Lodovico plead that he not be cruel to the woman who loves him. He accepts her then, but his language is not now so passionate as it was when he vowed to obey her command before knowing what it was:

To strive against the ordinance of fate,  
 I find is all in vain; Lady, your hand,  
 I must confess I love you, and I hope  
 Our faults shall be redeem'd in being henceforth  
 True votaries to vertue, and the faith  
 Our mutual vows shal to each other ow.

(3853-3860)

The Queen is not a good play. But quite possibly it could have been if Ford had been slightly more adroit in creating his characters, for his basic idea, his basic framework for the play, is a good one. It is easy to see what Ford is trying to do here. Both plots present extreme attitudes toward woman, and they tie together nicely. In The Lover's Melancholy, the women characters were the most interesting; but in The Queen, despite the title, it is the men who are of most importance. Alphonso is as extreme in his hatred of all women as Velasco is in his infatuation for Salassa. And because both Alphonso and Velasco represent extremes, both are in the wrong. Ford originally designed his play to illustrate the foolishness which all too frequently accompanies the relationships of men and women. Because he was dealing with extremities, because he failed to provide sufficient exposition for the existence of these extremities in his characters, the result was far from convincing.

Ford has simplified his design considerably. In The Lover's Melancholy he had three sets of lovers, a comic substructure, and an aged madman, whose cure was an important part of the play. In The Queen he has only two sets of lovers and a low comedy plot. Structurally, then, Ford's plays are improving. Yet as a whole The Queen is far less impressive than The Lover's Melancholy. We have seen the faults of the mainplot; the subplot has similar inadequacies.

The failure of the subplot is not due to Velasco; he

is in several ways the most interesting character in this play. The blame for the ineptitude of the situation falls on Salassa. Supposedly, she loves Velasco, but the tortures she puts him through are not consonant with love and her words to him are exceedingly harsh and cruel. She tells Lodovico that she has spurned Velasco because she felt unworthy of him but that her reward for presenting a champion for the Queen will enable her to present Velasco a suitable dower. Lodovico believes all this; evidently we are to do so also. Yet, had she really loved, she would not have inflicted such pain on the man who loved her.

The poetry of The Queen is far different from that of The Lover's Melancholy. The speeches of Palador, Eroclea, and Meleander are essentially lyric; those of Alphonso, the Queen, and Muretto are essentially dramatic. This difference is no condemnation of the language of The Queen. The passages which have been quoted are enough to show that the faults of the play are not in its poetry. Ford had an excellent command of his verse medium. Long ago Sherman pointed out the magnificence of this brief passage

Lords welcome, see thus arm in arm we pace  
To the wide theater of blood and shame  
My queen and I. . .

(3369-3372)

Sherman's comment was "What a royal accent here!"<sup>51</sup>

Some observers have liked The Queen. Genest, writing long before the play was identified as Ford's, said, "This is

on the whole a very good play--the plot is highly improbable, but it is conducted with great skill."<sup>52</sup> This is not surprising, coming from Genest. But it is rather surprising to see Schelling agreeing that the play is "of considerable worth."<sup>53</sup> Yet this judgment should not be disconcerting after all, for there is considerable worth in The Queen. Many parts are worthwhile. It is only when the play is looked at as a whole that it is upsetting to admirers of Ford.

### LOVE'S SACRIFICE

The date of the composition of Love's Sacrifice is unknown. It was registered for publication at the Stationer's by Hugh Beeston on January 21, 1633, and was printed later that year; but it might have been written and acted several years earlier. The title-page refers to performances "by the Queenes Majesties Servants at the Phoenix in Drury-Lane" and states that the play was "Received Generally well."<sup>54</sup> If this is true, then the tragedy fared considerably better with its contemporary audiences than it has done with a century and a half of readers, for Love's Sacrifice has received nothing but scorn and abuse from critics since renewed interest in Ford's plays began in the Romantic era.

The faults of the play do not lie, as with The Lover's Melancholy, in its structural framework, for it is one of Ford's best-made plays. In this tragedy Ford concentrates attention on one triangle of lovers--and here each is of

equal importance (in the triangle in The Queen Petruchi was greatly slighted). He has a second set of lovers, but these are always subordinated. There is another subplot too--but this, in the effects of lust which it graphically demonstrates, provides an evident contrast with the praise of chastity and devotion in the main romantic plot.

Nor do the faults of the play lie, as with The Queen, in the failure of the chief characters to be interesting and believable. The men and women of Love's Sacrifice are real human beings. Like The Queen, Love's Sacrifice deals with a husband's suspicions of his wife's infidelity. Duke Philipppo Caraffa, his wife Bianca, his friend Fernando, and his secretary D'Avolos correspond to Alphonso, the Queen, Petruchi, and Muretto--but, as we shall see, the characters of the tragedy are far superior to the ill-drawn figures of the tragi-comedy.

The evils of Love's Sacrifice lie in its theme: in its seeming approval of evil, in its seeming acceptance of chastity "as a material thing--not as an act or state of being."<sup>55</sup> The ill-received denouement has proven too difficult for most readers to accept and has led to a general condemnation of the play as a whole.

The core situation in Love's Sacrifice involves the relationship of Fernando, the closest friend of Duke Philipppo Caraffa of Pavia, and Bianca, the Duke's wife. Fernando is instantly attracted by the beauty of the duchess; he desires

her but his friendship with Caraffa is a force which will not allow any dalliance with Bianca. Torn between honor and desire Fernando knows no peace of mind:

Traitor to friendship, whither shall I run  
That, lost to reason, cannot sway the float  
Of the unruly faction in my blood?  
The duchess, O, the duchess! in her smiles  
Are all my joys abstracted

(I.ii.21)

In the second act Fernando tells Bianca of his passion. Her answer shows that this is not the first occasion that Fernando has made suit to her. She turns him away fiercely, warning him not to repeat his base proposals again:

No more! I spare  
To tell you what you are, and must confess  
Do almost hate my judgement, that it once  
Thought goodness dwelt in you. Remember now,  
It is the third time since your treacherous tongue  
Hath pleaded treason to my ear and fame;  
Yet, for the friendship 'twixt my lord and you,  
I have not voic'd your follies: if you dare  
To speak a fourth time, you shall rue your lust;  
'Tis all no better:--learn and love yourself.

(II.i.35)

Her harsh words offer Fernando no hope of ever winning her, and he realizes that he must gain control of his passion:

I must resolve to check this rage of blood,  
And will: she is all icy to my fires,  
Yet even that ice inflames in me desires.

(II.i.35)

Fernando does check his raging blood; and he then speaks to the duchess once more, this time to plead that his love for her is free of all base desires--he tells her that he comes before her only



To lay before your feet  
 In lowest vassalage the bleeding heart  
 That sighs the tender of a suit disdain'd.  
 Great lady, pity me, my youth, my wounds;  
 And do not think that I have cull'd  
     this time  
 From motion's swiftest measure to unclasp  
 The book of lust: if purity of love  
 Have residence in virtue's breast, lo here,  
 Bent lower in my heart than on my knee,  
 I beg compassion to a love as chaste  
 As softness of desire can intimate.

(II.iii.47)

Fernando is saying that he cannot refrain from loving her but that he can attempt to govern his passion. His plea is now that his love is honorable and "chaste." The change in his love for the duchess is wasted on Bianca at this time: she rebukes Fernando as harshly now as she did before. How strange it is, then, that when Bianca next appears she is in Fernando's bedchamber, vowing her love to him, but swearing that if he takes advantage of her passion that night she will kill herself the next morning.

Of this sudden change Peter Ure says, "Ford's dexterous use of the interval of silence between scenes to indicate changes in the minds and hearts of his characters is here well illustrated. The dramatist intends to show that Bianca, in an interval of reflection, has realized the pure and chaste nature of the passion which Fernando has displayed in the previous scene."<sup>56</sup> Yes, and she feels that now she may perhaps trust him with her own emotions--with the love for him which she has always felt but never dared make manifest.

After this night, the young lovers meet frequently, throwing wisdom and caution away. Rosielli warns Fernando that his intrigue with the duchess is known, and Fiormanda, the sister of the duke, gives proof of this when she begs Fernando to love her instead of Bianca. Fernando is oblivious of all this. Bianca is also forewarned. After D'Avolos whispers secrets of treachery in Caraffa's ear, the Duke recounts a most strange dream to his Bianca

--as I in glorious pomp  
Was sitting on my throne, whiles I had hemm'd  
My best-belov'd Bianca in mine arms,  
She reach'd my cap of state, and cast it down  
Beneath her foot, and spurn'd it in the dust:  
Whiles I--O, 'twas a dream too full of fate!--  
Was stooping down to reach it, on my head  
Fernando, like a traitor to his vows,  
Clapt, in disgrace, a coronet of horns.

(IV.ii.84)

Twice before he leaves, Caraffa warns Bianca to "think on my dream" (IV.ii.86). Bianca, like Fernando, pays no heed.

There is interesting characterization here. Fiormonda is willing to warn Fernando in the hope that he will marry her out of gratitude. Caraffa, fearing the truth, warns Bianca so that she will not see Fernando that night. If she is not caught in the act, Caraffa can then continue to love her as his wife. It is not the actuality of her infidelity so much as the proof of it that he fears now.

But that night the Duke and D'Avolos find Fernando and Bianca together in her chamber. Caraffa sends Fernando away under guard; he will be dealt with later. As he leaves,

Fernando shouts back to Caraffa, "Duke, do not shame thy manhood to lay hands/on that most innocent lady" (V.i.91).

Confronted by her angry husband Bianca is far from repentant. She speaks with extreme cruelty to the distressed man. She taunts him, insults him, seems in her every word to be driving him to kill her:

Shall I advise you?  
Hark in your ear; thank Heaven he was so slow  
As not to wrong your sheets' for, as I live,  
The fault was his, not mine.

(V.i.93)

She does, then, maintain her innocence of adultery; but how blatantly, belligerently she speaks of that innocence:

I must confess I miss'd no means, no time,  
To win him to my bosom; but so much,  
So holily, with such religion,  
He kept the laws of friendship, that my suit  
Was held but, in comparison, a jest;  
Nor did I offer urge the violence  
Of my affection, but as oft he urg'd  
The sacred vows of faith 'twixt friend and friend:  
Yet be assur'd, my lord, if ever language  
Of cunning servile flatteries, entreaties,  
Or what in me is, could procure his love,  
I would not blush to speak it.

(V.i.94)

Now Bianca has told everything: "You know the best and worst and all" (V.i.94). Her words are really not so much a defense of herself as of Fernando. She takes all the blame for promiscuity--and yet her defense of herself is explicitly stated: she has not committed adultery with Fernando. And now comes the error which will lead to three tragic deaths. Despite Bianca's harshness with her reputation--even perhaps

her exaggeration of her passionate attempts to seduce Fernando--Caraffa does not believe she is innocent of adultery, and it is for adultery that she must die. He could forgive her for toying with a kiss or two, but adultery demands a heavy punishment. Caraffa's speech on this matter is so surrounded with threats, abjurations, epithets, that the reason for her death is easily overlooked:

Adultery, Bianca! such a guilt  
 As, were the sluices of thine eyes let up,  
 Tears cannot wash it off; 'tis not the tide  
 Of trivial wantonness from youth to youth,  
 But thy abusing of thy lawful bed,  
 Thy husband's bed. . .

(V.i.94-95)

for which she is to lose her life.

Bianca is ready to die, for she fears that Caraffa, since he does not believe her innocent of adultery, will kill Fernando also--and "life to me without him were a death (V.i.95)." She begs Caraffa to spare Fernando even if he kills her. Now Caraffa's determination wavers, and he throws down his sword, saying Bianca might change. Fiormanda's taunts goad him into finishing what he had started, and he draws his dagger and stabs his wife, whose farewell to him is "Live to repent too late" (V.i.96).

This Caraffa does live to do. After slaying Bianca he rushes to kill Fernando and give his vengeance its full due. He finds the object of his fury armed and waiting, but at the news of Bianca's death, Fernando drops his sword and offers himself as another sacrifice to love. Over and over again

Fernando celebrates "chaste Bianca (V.ii.98)," denying that she fell into adultery:

If ever I unshrined  
The altar of her purity, or tasted  
More of her love than what without control  
Or blame a brother from a sister might,  
Rack me to atomies. I must confess  
I have too much abused thee; did exceed  
In lawless courtship; 'tis too true, I did:  
But, by the honour which I owe to goodness,  
For any actual folly I am free.

(V.ii.99)

Now Caraffa realizes that his wife had not committed adultery. His wrath is diverted from Fernando to himself, and only Fernando's intervention prevents the Duke from plunging the knife stained with Bianca's blood into his own vitals.

Three days later the Duke leads a procession of mourners to Bianca's tomb. Laying his hand thereon, he blesses it and confesses his own wrongs:

Peace and sweet rest sleep here! Let not the touch  
Of this my impious hand profane the shrine  
Of fairest purity, which hovers yet  
About those blessed bones inhears'd within.  
If in the bosom of this sacred tomb,  
Bianca, thy disturbed ghost doth range,  
Behold, I offer up the sacrifice  
Of bleeding tears, shed from a faithful spring,  
Pouring oblations of a mourning heart  
To thee, offended spirit! I confess  
I am Caraffa, he, that wretched man,  
That butcher, who, in my enraged spleen,  
Slaughter'd the life of innocence and beauty.  
Now come I to pay tribute to those wounds  
Which I digg'd up, and reconcile the wrongs  
My fury wrought and my contrition mourns.  
So chaste, so dear a wife was never man  
But I enjoy'd, yet in the bloom and pride  
Of all her years untimely took her life.--

(V.iii.103)

Caraffa utters such a rhapsody of praise to Bianca even though he caught her in the arms of another man.

When the tomb is opened, Fernando, dressed in a winding-sheet, arises--first to curse Caraffa once more and then to drink poison and fall back across Bianca's grave.

Of the man who has betrayed him, the Duke says:

And art thou gone, Fernando? art thou gone?  
Thou wert a friend unmatched; rest in thy fame.  
Sister, when I have finish'd my last days,  
Lodge me, my wife, and this unequall'd friend,  
All in one monument.

(V.iii.105-106)

Then Caraffa stabs himself. Both he and Fernando, his matchless friend, are entombed in the same sepulchre with Bianca and the tragedy is now complete.

The denouement of Love's Sacrifice was sufficiently strong to offend the moral sensitivity of Algernon Charles Swinburne<sup>57</sup>--no mean feat. The play is in fact the greatest problem in Ford's canon--it demands explanation far more than 'Tis Pity does. Bianca's honor is put to trial by a man she loves, and Ford is explicit in his defense of the way in which she answers that trial: Bianca remains at the end of the play a chaste and virtuous lady. This is a shocking verdict to modern readers because the duchess has obviously pandered to her pleasures and has come dangerously close to adultery. Certainly, she did at first spurn the advances of Fernando, but then she went to him in the night and offered herself to him. They became lovers and Bianca

gloried in that love. To hear such a woman celebrated so completely as a paragon of virtue and chastity is an almost unbelievable surprise to modern readers, who find her dishonorable and contemptible.

But Bianca is not contemptible. She is a young woman married to an aged man whom she does not love. Her nearness to Fernando at the court of Pavy has taught her for the first time what love can be; unfortunately her position has made it impossible that she should know first the joys of love:

if there can be  
A violence in love, then I have felt  
That tyranny:

(II.iv.51)

Therefore, "in one of the most striking scenes of dramatic literature"<sup>58</sup> she declares her passion to Fernando. The scene in Fernando's bedchamber is indeed most striking: "It startles, it excites," says one reader.<sup>59</sup> All this it does, and it also reveals how desperately honor and passion struggle in Bianca:

. . .betwixt my soul and heaven  
I vow'd a vow to live a constant wife  
I have done so;

(II.iv.52)

and then she adds that none but Fernando could make her break that vow. Now comes this brief, beautiful passage:

Bianca: Do I love thee now?  
Fernando: Beyond imagination.

Bianca: True, I do,  
Beyond imagination.

(II.iv.52)

She would be helpless, she says, if he forced her love; she would not resist if he pulled her to his bed. But--

Mark me now;  
If thou dost spoil me of this robe of shame,  
By my best comforts here I vow again,  
To thee, to heaven, to the world, to time,  
Ere yet the morning shall new-christen day,  
I'll kill myself.

(II.iv.52)

When Fernando chides her for such an expression of love, she says simply: "Fernando,/Jest not at my calamity." And calamity it is--as she hopelessly seeks to remain "a constant wife" but ease the "violence in love" at the same time.

In a later scene Bianca's character is revealed in one swift, sweeping line. She notices, or pretends to notice, that Fernando's lip bleeds, and carries a handkerchief to him. In front of the whole court, as she raises it to his lips, she whispers, "Speak, shall I steal a kiss? believe me, my lord, I long" (III.ii.62). Now this is dalliance, and it is extremely foolish dalliance--her love is giving her a false bravado that is a danger both to her and to Fernando.<sup>60</sup> So she grows foolish--but she is still loyal to Caraffa's bed, she is still "a constant wife."

In the final act Bianca and Fernando are in her bed-chamber, and the duchess must be clearly understood in what she says at this point:



. . .could I  
 As well dispense with conscience as renounce  
 The outside of my titles, the poor style  
 Of duchess, I had rather change my life  
 With any waiting-woman in the land  
 To purchase one night's rest with thee, Fernando,  
 Than be Caraffa's spouse a thousand years.

(V.i.89)

The beauty of the closing lines may blind us to the really important part of this passage, the opening words, "could I." The duchess has her conscience still, and though she has dallied, she has not, by her definitions, ceased to be "a constant wife."

Thus when Caraffa rages, and Bianca says such things as  
 . . .thank heaven he was so slow  
 As not to wrong your sheets; for, as I live,  
 The fault was his, not mine

(V.i.93)

she is first of all attempting to defend Fernando by taking all blame upon herself and by placing a far worse construction upon her actions than the truth demands. Actually, the fact that Caraffa's sheets were not betrayed was due to her own actions. She never allowed Fernando to know of her love until he had vowed his love was pure and she felt she could trust him with her affections. And always when she was alone with Fernando, she kept "conscience" between them. In this last act we must look not at her impassioned words to Caraffa, but at her actions as we know them.

This is obviously the way the seventeenth century poetic disciple of Robert Burton looked at his character.

We must remember one thing always about Bianca: even though she offers her body to Fernando, she retains enough sense of "a right line even in obliquity" that she vows to kill herself if he should take advantage of her passion. To Ford this was a significant revelation of her character, for the dramatist understood how extreme could be the suffering caused by unrequited passion. Burton said so and all authorities agreed; but Ford could undoubtedly have found proof of a lover's suffering outside of books. Bianca's determination to remain a true wife to Caraffa begins to diminish under the fierce spread of her passion. She is a victim of love-melancholy, and all incidents conspire together to inflame that passion still further.

In The Anatomy of Melancholy Ford found that "hot and Southern countries are prone to lust,"<sup>61</sup> and Bianca is in the court of Pavia in Italy. Burton also warned that the ease and luxury of the courts of nobles were dangers to virtue<sup>62</sup>--Bianca, the duchess, lives in ease and luxury. In courts there is too much opportunity for dalliance says Burton:<sup>63</sup> Fernando is her husband's closest friend; that relationship continually brings wife and friend into juxtaposition around Caraffa's person. Fernando and Bianca are both young and attractive, fit to prey upon each other's minds--for love enters through the eyes.<sup>64</sup> Her husband is old and not as handsome as Fernando; she has never loved Caraffa, she has married him because he came to her offering

the astonished young girl wealth and position--marriages must agree in "fortunes and birth," cautioned Burton.<sup>65</sup> And Bianca is a woman--"women misaffected are far more violent" read Ford's authority.<sup>66</sup> There are no sweet memories of past love binding Bianca to her duke. There is only her idea of personal honor, and this seems to be under attack by every element in her life. And still she does not fall into adultery.

Thus, the fact that Bianca gains control of her passions this side of adultery is her triumph. That she and her lover do not succumb to their physical desires is what enables Ford to term Bianca "chaste" and Fernando "a faithful friend."

Admittedly, this does reduce chastity to a mere physical thing. Ford separates the desire and the act, and as long as Bianca can do the same, she is "chaste." Such casuistry, such a line of demarcation, may not be entirely satisfactory; but it must not be considered that Ford's final views as stated in the last act stamp him as immoral or degenerate. He poses a difficult problem for himself--a problem involving a woman's heart in conflict with moral law. He treats Bianca and her situation and the whole problem of the relationship of the sexes with high art and high seriousness.

Although few critics have really sympathized with Bianca the woman, many have praised Bianca the character.

She "has been drawn by Ford with a supreme understanding of human waywardness and a woman's passion," says one.<sup>67</sup> She "has no precedent;"<sup>68</sup> she "is Ford's most subtle psychological portrait, a woman who fights a silent and losing battle against her ambivalent feelings," say others.<sup>69</sup> All of these views are correct. The character of Bianca is more subtle than that of either of Ford's other tragic heroines--to create her portrait was Ford's most difficult task.

The character of Fernando is convincing too. The ties of friendship weaken in the face of passion, but friendship eventually wins out:<sup>70</sup>

she's bosom'd to my friend;  
There, there I am quite lost: will not be won;  
Still worse and worse: abhors to hear me speak;  
Eternal mischief!- I must urge no more;  
For were I not be-leper'd in my soul,  
Here were enough to quench the flames of hell.

(II.ii.36)

When he next meets Bianca he vows his love is pure; and when Bianca enters his chamber in the night, he can say:

. . . Heaven forbid that I  
Should by a wanton appetite profane  
This sacred temple!  
Enough: I'll master passion, and triumph  
In being conquer'd

(III.iii.53-54)

A word more should be said of the character of Philippo Caraffa, the Duke of Pavia. Caraffa is old, but he is not impotent; he is gullible, but he is not a dotard. Ford emphasizes this last fact by creating the character of

Mauruccio for the play. Caraffa, uxorious as he is, is not the foolish old man that Mauruccio is shown to be.

Caraffa's tragedy is the same as that of Othello; he, too, loved well but not wisely. The beauty of Bianca's face prompted him to offer her his hand--he neglected the difference between their ages and stations. He was not so young and handsome as Fernando; and when Bianca succumbed to love, she dragged Caraffa down with her.

The villains in Love's Sacrifice are a convincing pair of schemers. Fiormonda's treachery is motivated by jealousy; she has lost Fernando to Bianca and she desires vengeance on them both. D'Avolos has no great personal hatred for either of the people he destroys: he leads them into peril simply because that is what Fiormonda desires and because he always does what Fiormonda wants him to do.

In the first scene D'Avolos acts as the intermediary between Fiormonda and Fernando, telling the young courtier that he is loved by the lady. He receives this news coldly, but D'Avolos tells his mistress that he had received it with joy. Later Fiormonda carries her own suit to Fernando, but he spurns her offer of marriage. When she learns that Fernando loves Bianca, she wants vengeance on them both.

One evening Fiormonda arranges to have Fernando and Bianca left alone, but as she and her attendants withdraw, she tells D'Avolos to return and watch what transpires between the lovers. In reality Bianca once again spurns

Fernando's advances, but this is not what the deceitful

D'Avolos tells Fiormonda when she returns:

Fiormonda: Speak, D'Avolos, how thrives intelligence?

D'Avolos: Above the prevention of fate, madam. I saw him kneel, make pitiful faces, kiss hands and forefingers, rise,--and by this time he is up, up, madam. Doubtless the youth aims to be duke, for he is gotten into the duke's seat an hour ago.

Fiormonda: Is't true?

D'Avolos: Oracle, oracle! Siege was laid, parley admitted, composition offered, and the fort entered; there's no interruption. The duke will be at home to-morrow, gentle animal!-- What d'ye resolve?

Fiormonda: To stir-up tragedies as black as brave,  
And send the lecher panting to his grave.

(II.iii.50)

D'Avolos arouses the Duke's suspicions by pointed mutterings which he will not explain to the questioning Duke. When Bianca takes her handkerchief, supposedly to wipe the blood from Fernando's bleeding teeth off his lip, D'Avolos begins his conspiracy:

D'Avolos: Beshrew my heart, but that's not so good.

Duke: Ha, what's that thou mislikest, D'Avolos?

D'Avolos: Nothing, my lord;--but I was hammering a conceit of mine own, which cannot, I find, in so short a time thrive as a day's practice.

Fiormonda: Aside Well put off, secretary.

(III.ii.62)

Later Caraffa complains of a headache. This is too good an opportunity for D'Avolos to miss: "A shrewd ominous token; I like not that neither"--the secretary's reference is of course to the cuckolding of Caraffa; his head hurts because his horns are beginning to grow. The Duke responds warmly:

Duke: Again! what is't you like not?  
 D'Avolos: I beseech your highness excuse me;  
 I am so busy with this frivolous project,  
 and can bring it to no shape, that it  
 almost confounds my capacity.

(III.ii.63)

Caraffa lets the matter pass for the moment, but he does not forget it. As soon as he and his secretary are alone, he demands to know the meaning behind D'Avolos's words. Protesting all the while that it is only his loyalty to Caraffa that prompts him to speak, D'Avolos repeats the lie that Fernando has cuckolded Caraffa. The Duke does not immediately give himself over to vengeance. He warns D'Avolos that such a charge must be substantiated; the Duke must see proof of Bianca's sin with his own eyes. The similarity between this scene and the one in which Iago acts on Othello's jealous tendencies is readily apparent.

Fiormonda adds all she can to direct her brother's anger at Fernando. She, too, invents a lie to serve her purpose: she tells the Duke that Fernando plotted the death of Ferentes, a young lustful courtier who was stabbed to death by three women whom he had betrayed:

Think on Ferentes first, and think by whom  
 The harmless youth was slaughter'd: had he liv'd,  
 He would have told you tales: Fernando fear'd it;  
 And to prevent him,--under show, for sooth,  
 Of rare device,--most trimly cut him off.  
 Have you yet eyes, duke?

(IV.i.76)

She succeeds. Caraffa's anger is aroused, and at that moment he is ready for blood. But time cools his ardor considerably

and even after he finds Bianca and Fernando together he cannot at first bring himself to kill his beautiful wife; he would let her live, hoping she would reform. But Fiormonda's fury is that of a twice-scorned woman; she has lost Fernando to Bianca, and nothing but blood will satisfy her. It is she who taunts her brother into killing Bianca:

Dost thou halt? faint coward, dost thou wish  
To blemish all thy glorious ancestors?  
Is this thy courage?

(V.i.95)

When Caraffa discovers the truth of Bianca's chastity, D'Avolos realizes that his days of prosperity are near an end. There is even a touch of pathos in his long prose passage at the end of the second scene of the final act; D'Avolos says:

. . . 't may be my Lady Fiormonda will  
stand on my behalf to the duke: that's but  
a single hope; a disgraced courtier oftener  
finds enemies to sink him when he is falling  
than friends to relieve him. I must resolve  
to stand to the hazard of all brunts now.  
Come what may, I will not die like a coward;  
and the world shall know it.

(V.ii.101)

The hope that Fiormonda will intercede for him is crushed as soon as he speaks to her:

D'Avolos: Madam, I trust the service--  
Fiormonda: Fellow, learn to new-live: the way to  
                  thrift  
                  For thee in grace is a repentant shrift.

(V.iii.102)

Fiormonda has become aware of the wrongs she has done,



and in her guilt she spurns her partner in crime. On the lady's behalf, it should be said that D'Avolos lied to her just as he lied to Caraffa. It is D'Avolos, not Fiormonda, who is the chief perpetrator of tragedy in this play.

After Caraffa's suicide, Fiormonda marries Roseilli, who still loves her in spite of all she has done, and thereby makes him the new ruler of Pavia. The new duke's first act is to send D'Avolos to death. The villain is, however, true to his word; he does not face death cowardly. As he is led away, he says, "here's my comfort, I make but one in the number of the tragedy of princes" (V.iii.107). Then Roseilli banishes his wife forever from his bed. At first Fiormonda is amazed at this sudden outburst from her new husband: "O, Me! is this your love?" (V.iii.107). But then she accepts it:

I embrace it:  
Happy too late, since lust hath made me foul,  
Henceforth I'll dress my bride-bed in my soul.

(V.iii.108)

The lust of Fiormonda contrasts vividly with the love of Bianca and Fernando.

So does the lust of Ferentes. The young courtier is a despicable lecher, and Ford has made his faults fully apparent. Perhaps Ferentes's best scene occurs when he is confronted simultaneously by the three women whom he has gotten with child. Ferentes vows he will marry none of the three, and then he audaciously gives them reasons why:

You, Colona, had a pretty art in your dalliance; but your fault was, you were too suddenly won.--You, Madam Morona, could have pleased well enough some three or four-and-thirty years ago; but you are too old.--You, Julia, were young enough; but your fault is, you have a scurvy face.--Now, everyone knowing her proper defect, thank me that I ever vouchsafed you the honour of my bed once in your lives. If you want clouts, all I'll promise is to rip up an old shirt or two. So, wishing a speedy deliverance to all your burdens, I commend you to your patience.

(III.i.59)

This contemptible speech has bought Ferentes more than he bargained for. The three ruined women are one in their desire for vengeance, and their daggers will eventually rid the court of Ferentes.

The other minor characters in the play are all credible. Roseilli uses the disguise of a fool to good advantage, and in the final scene he shows a strength of character which bodes well for the success of his reign. His friend Petruchio is an honorable figure, but he has no really fine scene. Like Petruchio, Nibrassa has had a daughter betrayed by Ferentes. Nibrassa's fury is boundless, and his passionate outbursts in III.i. are good things of the kind.

The humor in Love's Sacrifice is provided by old Mauruccio, his servant Giacopo, and Roseilli in his disguise as a fool. Although Mauruccio is past the age where he should feel the flames of love, he fancies himself in love with Fiormonda. Mauruccio first appears at the very beginning of the second act; he is immediately ridiculous:

Beard, be confin'd to neatness, that no hair  
 May stover up to prick my mistress' lip,  
 More rude than bristles of a porcupine.--

(II.i.29)

In addition to being a great lover, Mauruccio is also a great poet: "O, Giacompo, Petrarch was a dunce, Dante a jig-maker, Sanazzar a goose, and Ariosto a puck-fist, to me" (II.i.30). He proceeds to prove his greatness in verse by greeting the Duke and Duchess with an impromptu rime whose twisted syntax would have done honor to Lord Byron in Don Juan:

O, duke most great, and most renowned duchess!  
 Excuse my apprehension, which not much is;

(II.i.32)

Fernando has sneaked Roseilli back into the court in the disguise of a fool and given him to Mauruccio as a gift. As Giacompo implies, it is hard to tell which is the wiser man. Mauruccio has a sudden inspiration: he will give this fool to Fiormonda as a present instead of gifting her with his portrait containing a mirror in the shape of a heart on his breast. Giacompo thinks this is a fine idea: "My lord, you have most rarely bethought you; for so shall she no oftener see the fool but she shall remember you better than by a thousand looking-glasses" (II.ii.43). Giacompo's meaning is clear to everyone but his master. Fiormonda accepts the gift and gives Mauruccio a toothpick in return. Mauruccio is so grateful that he is moved to poetry:

If I grow sick, to make my spirits quicker,  
I will revive them with this sweet toothpicker.

(II.ii.44)

Mauruccio plays a part in the masque in which Ferentes is stabbed by the three women he has gotten with child. For this Mauruccio is banished from the court, although he is innocent of any complicity in the crime. Mauruccio asks Giacopo whether he will forsake his unfortunate master; and Giacopo, who has been weeping over his master's plight, answers: "I forsake ye! no, not as long as I have a whole ear on my head, come what will come" (IV.i.80). As long as Giacopo has an ear left to enable him to find enjoyment in Mauruccio's foolish speech, he would not desert his master--where else could he find such entertainment?

Admittedly the humor is often very low. It is so in II.i., and it is so in this exchange:

Ferentes: Trust me, my Lord Mauruccio, you are now younger in the judgment of those that compare your former age with your latter by seven-and-twenty years than you were three years ago: by all my fidelity, tis a miracle!  
The ladies wonder at you.

Mauruccio: Let them wonder; I am wise as I am courtly.

Giacopo: The ladies, my lord, call him the Green Broom of the court,--he sweeps all before him,--and swear he has a stabbing wit: it is a very glister to laughter.

Mauruccio: Nay, I know I can tickle 'em at my pleasure; I am stiff and strong, Ferentes.

Giacopo: Aside A radish-root is a spear of steel in comparison of I know what.

(II.ii.40)

At other times there is something brutal in the humor of this tragedy. This occurs, for instance, when D'Avolos incites the Duke's rage by claiming that Pavia's heir will be the son of Fernando rather than Caraffa: "You shall be sure to have a bastard--of whom you did not so much as beget a little toe, a left ear, or half the further side of an upper lip--" (IV.i.75).

Despite such moments as these, the comedy of Love's Sacrifice is among Ford's most successful efforts in this vein. Mauruccio is a fool, but unlike others of Ford's fools--Bergetto in 'Tis Pity, for example--Mauruccio is truly funny. Giacopo is extremely witty; he is one of Ford's best comic characters.

Love's Sacrifice is an excellent play. One of the reasons for its success is that each character is vividly and interestingly alive. Ford did not always write so carefully or so well.

#### 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

'Tis Pity She's a Whore and The Broken Heart are almost universally considered Ford's two best plays. Both were published in the same year, but the former is, I think, the earlier of the two. Few facts are known about the history of 'Tis Pity. The tragedy was acted by the Queen's company at the Phoenix, but the date is unknown. Nor is there any evidence to fix the date of composition. The reader may make what he wishes to out of the fact that in his dedication Ford

calls this play "these first fruits of my leisure in the action." 'Tis Pity is "Jacobean," and it is not impossible that it was his first independent play.

'Tis Pity She's a Whore has been offending the moral tastes of readers for the better part of three centuries, ever since 1691, when Gerard Langbaine complained that Ford had painted the incestuous passion of Giovanni and Annabella in "too beautiful Colours."<sup>71</sup> Here we perhaps have the implicit assertion, repeatedly made explicit in later criticism, that Ford was in complete sympathy with the excesses of his perverted lovers.

In the eighteenth century two of the chief authorities on the English stage, Theophilus Cibber and David Erskine Baker, cited the damning judgment of Langbaine; the latter, if not both, did so with complete approval.<sup>72</sup> Otherwise the play was almost forgotten throughout the entire age.

In the very first year of the nineteenth century Charles Dibdin again called attention to 'Tis Pity. The critic objected to it on a matter of principle: the incestuous love of a brother and sister was not, he thundered, a subject fit for stage presentation.<sup>73</sup> In 1819 the Scottish poet Thomas Campbell echoed this feeling when he wrote, "Better that poetry should cease than have to do with such subjects."<sup>74</sup>

Already the two areas in which 'Tis Pity She's a Whore lies most vulnerable to critical attack have been assaulted. Dibdin and Campbell have objected to such a subject, such a

theme, as the love of a brother and sister; Langbaine, Cibber and Baker have felt that Ford approved of that love. Both of these charges have been repeated by criticism ever since.

The condemnation of the tragedy continued throughout the romantic era. In his attack on Ford, Hazlitt concentrated on 'Tis Pity: "I suspect that the exceptionableness of the subject is that which constitutes the chief merit of the play. The repulsiveness of the story is what gives it its critical interest."<sup>75</sup>

The Victorians despised the play and the man who wrote it. With the Victorians one of the cardinal points in the adverse criticism of Ford was the old charge that he had condoned the abnormal passions of Giovanni and Annabella. Therefore, it is surprising to see that at least one Victorian felt Ford to be decadent because he lacked emotional sympathy with his lovers in their plight: "it is manifest that he is nowise carried away by the imaginative contemplation of it [his story] himself, but is all the while curiously studying the monstrous growth of his own diseased fancy in a cold anatomical fashion that rouses our moral repugnance. . . ." <sup>76</sup>

It has also been the considered opinion of many critics in our own century that in 'Tis Pity Ford gave his approval to the young lovers and thereby attacked the moral order of civilization. It is Stuart Sherman who has expressed this critical belief most feelingly:

It is the impure, material universe at cross purposes with the heart that causes their tragedy. It is impossible not to feel beneath the words of Giovanni the sentiments of Ford. He draws this hero and heroine as if he loved them. He gives them all the fine situations, the poetical imagination, the steadfastness, the noble sentiments, the starry aspirations. He strives as much as he can to put them in the right and the world in the wrong. He crowns their adulterous and incestuous loves with roses, and attempts to irradiate their crime with celestial light.<sup>77</sup>

It is a pity to have to disagree with such a flowery piece of prose as this, but in reality Sherman was more on the side of the lovers than Ford was.

In the 1930's Allardyce Nicoll singled out 'Tis Pity and denounced the dramatist "who descended to the most disgusting and nauseating of sexual emotions" ("nauseating" was his favorite word where Ford was concerned<sup>78</sup>). And as late as 1947 Wallace Bacon was still citing 'Tis Pity as evidence that Ford was indeed the "high priest of decadence."<sup>79</sup>

'Tis Pity had its defenders even in the nineteenth century, but they were few and far between. As far back as 1808 Charles Lamb had remarked that Giovanni and Annabella had discovered "a right line even in obliquity."<sup>80</sup> But in return for this verdict Lamb awoke one morning to find himself infamous--the literary world was leaping at his throat, the pack being led by Hazlitt. "Ford is not so great a favourite with me as with some others, from whose judgment I dissent with diffidence," was Hazlitt's sarcastic beginning.<sup>81</sup> In succeeding decades the school of Hazlitt



prevailed, and it was a long time before Lamb's encomiums were seconded in public.

When support did come, it came from a source little calculated to convert Victorian thinking on 'Tis Pity. In 1871 Algernon Charles Swinburne published a lengthy and perceptive article in the Fortnightly Review which was full of praise for Ford and 'Tis Pity She's a Whore. Swinburne made an impassioned defense of 'Tis Pity, beginning with the observation: "It is somewhat unfortunate that the very title of Ford's masterpiece should sound so strangely in the ears of a generation 'whose ears are the chastest part about them.'" Swinburne concluded that Ford's power as a poet was a "moral power."<sup>82</sup> Such a defense was no very great benefit to Ford's reputation in the remaining years of the century: the Victorians were hardly content to consider Algernon Charles Swinburne the final authority in matters of morals. The typical Victorian opinion was probably voiced by Agnes Muir Mackenzie in her reference to "Swinburne, who suffering himself from Ford's defects, was the less likely to be troubled by them."<sup>83</sup>

But gradually the defense of Ford and of his themes gained momentum. The highly respected critic and scholar Sir H. J. C. Grierson, writing in 1906, argued, "There is no justification. . .for any adverse judgment on Ford's moral character based on the character of his themes."<sup>84</sup> He noted also that 'Tis Pity closes with a blend of Ford's own and a

"more orthodox morality," adding that "Shakespeare's tragedies close on no such note of moral or religious comment--not Hamlet, not even Lear...."85

Our post-Freudian generations have been more tolerant of the work of Ford, with all its Burtonian overtones. T. S. Eliot is not always a good critic of Ford nor a good critic of Elizabethan drama; but for all his diletantism, he has made one strikingly relevant observation concerning 'Tis Pity:

To the use of incest between brother and sister for a tragic plot there should be no objection of principle: the test is, however, whether the dramatic poet is able to give universal significance to a perversion of nature, which, unlike some other aberrations is defended by no one. . . . Certainly it is to Ford's credit that, having chosen this subject. . . . he went in for it thoroughly. There is none of the prurient flirting with impropriety which makes Beaumont and Fletcher's King and No King meretricious. . . . Ford handles the theme with all the seriousness of which he is capable, and he can hardly be accused here of wanton sensationalism.<sup>86</sup>

The old idea that Ford is decadent because he deals with themes that should have been taboo is no longer in vogue. Modern critics, who have read not only Freud but also Eugene O'Neill and Tennessee Williams, are for the most part agreed that the fact that Ford moved beyond the normal range of seventeenth century drama is a compliment to his inquiring spirit rather than a sign of moral decadence.

The other ancient critical doctrine, that Ford supported his lovers in their struggle against moral order, is also frequently opposed now. Among others, George Sampson,<sup>87</sup>

O. J. Campbell,<sup>88</sup> T. M. Parrott and R. H. Ball,<sup>89</sup> have denied the contention. But it is still propounded by some. Even Grierson has suggested that Ford is liable to the charge of decadence on this score,<sup>90</sup> and G. F. Sensabaugh has insisted that Ford is a moral anarchist.<sup>91</sup> We shall want to consider this controversy in detail as we look at the play.

The beginning of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore is as relevant as that of The Broken Heart and far more dynamic.<sup>92</sup> A friar is speaking to a young man, and the first words of the clergyman immediately reveal his displeasure:

Dispute no more in this; for know, young man,  
 These are no school-points; nice philosophy  
 May tolerate unlikely arguments,  
 But Heaven admits no jest: wits that presum'd  
 On wit too much, by striving how to prove  
 There was no God with foolish grounds of art,  
 Discover'd first the nearest way to hell,  
 And fill'd the world with devilish atheism,  
 Such questions, youth, are fond: far better 'tis  
 To bless the sun than reason why it shines;  
 Yet He thou talk'st of is above the sun.  
 No more! I may not hear it.

(I.i.113)

The youth, Giovanni, has disclosed the terrible secret of his love to Friar Bonaventura, telling that holy man that his own sister is the object of his desire--and in so doing, hinting that neither God nor man had the right to place barriers between him and his love. For this apostasy, Giovanni has received the Friar's stern rebuke at the opening of the play.

Giovanni is the important character in this drama.

After the Friar threatens him with a fiery doom, the youth promises to give himself up to prayer. If he cannot find peace in prayer, then he will know that it is "My fate and not my lust that leads me on." For the fact that he did make his prayers for peace, we have only Giovanni's testimony, and we may take that for what we feel it to be worth-- certainly his prayers were completely ineffectual; he abandons himself to fate.

Like all unhappy lovers, Giovanni sickens and grows pale. His condition becomes noticeable to Annabella, and with sisterly affection she inquires the cause of his indisposition. Unfortunately he tells her, and she admits to loving him in return. The scene in which they exchange their mutual vows is potent drama.

When Giovanni reveals his love to his sister he first pleads the extent of his torments, "My tortur'd soul/Hath felt affliction in the heat of death," and then protests that he has done all he can to avoid this moment;

I have spent  
Many a silent night in sighs and groans;  
Run over all my thoughts, despis'd my fate,  
Reason'd against the reasons of my love,  
Done all that smooth-cheek'd virtue could advise;  
But found all bootless: 'Tis my destiny  
That you must either love or I must die.

(I.iii.125)

And then he lies:

I have ask'd counsel of the holy church,  
Who tells me I may love you; and 'tis just  
That since I may, I should; and will, yes, will.

(I.iii.126)

Surprisingly Annabella answers:

For every sign that thou hast spent for me  
I have sigh'd ten; for every tear shed twenty:  
And not so much for that I lov'd, as that  
I durst not say I lov'd, nor scarcely think it.

(I.iii.126)

Then occurs this fantastic moment:

Annabella: On my knees She kneels.  
Brother, even by our mother's dust, I  
charge you,  
Do not betray me to your mirth or hate:  
Love me or kill me, brother.  
Giovanni: On my knees, He kneels.  
Sister, even by my mother's dust, I  
charge you,  
Do not betray me to your mirth or hate:  
Love me or kill me, sister.

(I.iv.126-127)

Nicoll says, "The terrible scene, in which the two lovers fall on their knees in a frenzy of amorous passion has something of lunacy in it...."<sup>93</sup> For once he is right--though not for the reasons he thought. The madness belongs to Giovanni, not to Ford.

We should look closely at the character of the brother to see whether Ford has really ennobled him or whether critics have simply misunderstood Ford's drawing of the unhappy youth. Immediately after his conquest Giovanni grows wanton--he speaks flippantly to Annabella herself and she chides him (II.i.131). And worse, he speaks grossly to the Friar of the physical pleasures he has enjoyed: he speaks of the beauty of Annabella's lips, eyes, hair--then stops:

But father, what is else for pleasure fram'd,  
Lest I offend your ears, shall go unnam'd.

(II.v.147)

The arguments which Giovanni formerly presented as questions, he now presents as answers. The Friar is properly upset. He warns Giovanni to leave his sister, to repent while there is still time. But Giovanni interrupts; to him time is important only in that it allows him to make love to Annabella (II.v.146).

When Annabella sickens with the effect of her pregnancy, it is to Bonaventura that Giovanni turns. The Friar's advice is that Annabella speedily marry, and her marriage with Soranzo is quickly done. The marriage does not deter Giovanni from enjoying his sister:

. . .I find no change  
Of pleasure in this formal law of sports.  
She is still one to me, and every kiss  
As sweet and as delicious as the first  
I reap'd, when yet the privilege of youth  
Entitled her a virgin.

(V.iii.192)

Giovanni's presumptions grow and grow. He laughs away all Bonaventura's entreaties to repentance. Atheism is fully evident in his words.

The hell you oft have prompted is naught else  
But slavish and fond superstitious fear;  
And I could prove it too--

(V.iii.192)

Bonaventura gives the young man a letter from Annabella. Giovanni recognizes that it is from his sister and he turns

his anger on her as he reads the contents:

'Tis in her hand,  
I know't; and 'tis all written in her blood.  
She writes I know not what. Death! I'll not fear  
An armed thunderbolt aim'd at my heart.  
She writes, we are discover'd:--Pox on dreams  
Of low faint-hearted cowardice!--discover'd?  
The devil we are! which way is't possible?  
Are we grown traitors to our own delights?

(V.iii.192-193)

Then at the last, after having admitted the letter is  
Annabella's, he rages at the Friar:

. . . 'tis but forg'd  
This is your peevish chattering, weak old man!

(V.iii.193)

Ford was not, I submit, in complete sympathy with Giovanni.  
The poet has many detractors who have yet to explain how  
this mad fury is consistent with the nobility with which  
they think Ford endowed his hero.

Immediately after Giovanni insults the Friar,  
Vasques, the servant of the brother-in-law whom the youth  
has betrayed, enters to offer the young man an invitation  
to Soranzo's banquet. Giovanni's answer shows that he is  
aware of the validity of Annabella's letter and of the pur-  
pose of this invitation: "Yes, tell him I dare come" (V.iii.193).

Giovanni's hubris is now nearing its greatest height:

Not go, stood Death  
Threatening his armies of confounding plagues,  
With hosts of dangers hot as blazing stars,  
I would be there: Not go! Yes, and resolve  
To strike as deep in slaughter as they all;  
For I will go.

. . . . .

Despair, or tortures of a thousand hells;  
All's one to me: I have set up my rest.  
Now, now, work serious thoughts on baneful plots;  
Be all a man, my soul; let not the curse  
Of old prescription rent from me the gall  
Of courage, which enrolls a glorious death:  
If I must totter like a well-grown oak,  
Some under-shrubs shall in my weighty fall  
Be crush'd to splits; with me they all shall perish!

(V.iii.193-194)

When he arrives at the house of Soranzo, he immediately  
looses his emotions on Annabella:

What, chang'd so soon! hath your new sprightly  
lord  
Found out a trick in night-games more than we  
Could know in our simplicity? Ha! is't so?  
Or does the fit come on you, to prove treacherous  
To your past vows and oaths?

(V.v.197)

Annabella warns him to be aware of the dangers he is in. But the madman will pursue his passion to the grave:

What danger's half so great as thy revolt?  
Thou art a faithless sister, else thou know'st,  
Malice, or any treachery beside,  
Would stoop to my bent brows; why, I hold fate  
Clasp'd in my fist, and could command  
    the course  
Of time's eternal motion, hadst thou been  
One thought more steady than an ebbing sea.  
And what? You'll now be honest, that's resolv'd?

(V.v.197-198)

One final passage in this powerful scene must be marked, and we must contrast the atheism and sensuality of the brother with the simple faith of the sister:

Giovanni: The schoolmen teach that all this globe  
of earth  
Shall be consum'd to ashes in a minute.



Annabella: So I have read too.  
 Giovanni: But 'twere somewhat strange  
 To see the waters burn: could I believe  
 This might be true, I could believe  
           as well  
           There might be hell or heaven.  
 Annabella: That's most certain.  
 Giovanni: A dream, a dream! else in this other  
           world  
           We should know one another.  
 Annabella: So we shall.  
 Giovanni: Have you heard so?  
 Annabella: For certain.  
 Giovanni: But d'ye think  
           That I shall see you there?--You look  
           on me.--  
           May we kiss one another, prate or laugh,  
           Or do as we do here?  
 Annabella: I know not that.

(V.v.198-199)

In the face of present death, what is Giovanni's chief concern--  
 "May we kiss one another.../Or do as we do here?" Is it lust  
 or is it love that leads Giovanni on? The answer is obvious.

After stabbing his sister to death--her last words  
 being "Brother unkind, unkind," (V.v.201)--Giovanni races  
 into the banquet hall with her heart on the point of his  
 dagger to scream his crimes in his father's face and cause  
 the death of that kind old man. After mortally wounding  
 Soranzo, he is himself struck down and dies. It seems sig-  
 nificant that Ford allows Soranzo, an adulterer, to live long  
 enough for one last speech after Giovanni falls; Soranzo says:

. . . in death well pleas'd that I have liv'd  
 To see my wrongs reveng'd on that black devil.  
 O Vasques, to thy bosom let me give  
 My last of breath; let not that lecher live.

(V.vi.205)

Such is the end of Giovanni, the lover whose actions Ford is supposed to have condoned.

Now we must look at the sister, for her actions prove Giovanni wrong. After Annabella sickens from her pregnancy, she confesses to the Friar. She is helpless before his furious charge to repentance, and she accepts his advice to marry Soranzo. But Annabella's repentance does not last long, for she continues her sins with Giovanni. A second repentance is necessary for her; this comes after Soranzo discovers that she is carrying a child. At her window Annabella confesses her sins of passion:

. . . they who sleep in lethargies of lust  
Hug their confusion, making Heaven unjust;  
And so did I.

(V.i.189)

When she meets Giovanni for the last time and tells him, "Brother, dear brother, know what I have been (V.v.198)," she is speaking under conviction of her misdeeds and with the full realization that her passion for Giovanni was wrong. By continuing her incestuous love after taking the vows of marriage, she tempted the justice of Heaven a second time. This she has realized at last; this time her repentance is sincere. She dies with a prayer for forgiveness on her lips.

Sensabaugh insists that Giovanni and Annabella are Platonists and that Ford sympathized with them. Annabella is beautiful, he says; all Platonic heroines are beautiful, he adds; Annabella is a beautiful Platonic heroine, he

concludes. This is remarkable critical shortsightedness.

All heroines in Elizabethan drama are beautiful; most heroines in any literature are beautiful. Now it is true that Giovanni does use a Platonic code--"Beauty and goodness are one and the same"--to justify his love:

the frame

And composition of the mind doth follow  
 The frame and composition of the body:  
 So, where the body's furniture is beauty,  
 The mind's must needs be virtue; which allow'd,  
 Virtue itself is reason but refin'd,  
 And love the quintessence of that: this proves,  
 My sister's beauty being rarely fair  
 Is rarely virtuous; chiefly in her love,  
 And chiefly in that love, her love to me:  
 If hers to me, then so is mine to her;  
 Since in like causes are effects alike.

(II.v.146)

Giovanni and Sensabaugh are very impressed with this reasoning. But the Friar and Ford thunder, "O ignorance in knowledge" in answer to such casuistry.

Giovanni's mind is warped. Heroical love, love melancholy, has caused it to wander away from purity forever. He is groping desperately for justification of his most heinous crime, one that even savages deplore. This wild groping has led him to question even religion, and the fact that he seizes upon a Platonic argument must not be taken as a sign that Ford believed in cult doctrine. Sensabaugh is certainly wrong when he maintains that Ford "actually argues that a beautiful body must indicate a virtuous mind."<sup>94</sup> Annabella proves him wrong in her repentance:

My conscience now stands up against my lust  
 With depositions character'd in guilt,  
 And tells me I am lost: now I confess  
 Beauty that clothes the outside of the face  
 Is cursed if it be not cloth'd with grace.

(V.i.189)

That is Ford's verdict on the matter of the Platonic code.

As we have frequently seen, Ford demands that love exist within the bounds of reason. Giovanni's mental faculties have become clouded by the disease of lust. He attempts to apply casuistry, sophistry to his problem, but Bonaventura is always there to tell him he reasons ill.

It is true, I think, that the most beautiful poetry occurs in those moments shared by the young lovers. In fact, the speeches of many characters are in prose, as if Ford were deliberately heightening the effect of the lovers' language by contrast. The poetry is sometimes flowery, sometimes more austere, but always beautiful. When Giovanni first reveals his love to Annabella, he woos her thus:

The lily and the rose, most sweetly strange,  
 Upon your dimpled cheeks do strive for change:  
 Such lips would tempt a saint; such hands as those  
 Would make an anchorite lascivious.

(I.iii.124)

In reply to his revelation, she answers simply: "Thou hast won/The field, and never fought...." (I.iv.126). These passages are not great poetry, but they are beautiful in their way--and it is this fact that Langbaine and three centuries of more vehement detractors have decried.

After their first moments of love, Giovanni pays his sister this fair compliment:

Thus hung Jove on Leda's neck,  
And suck'd divine ambrosia from her lips.  
I envy not the mightiest man alive;  
But hold myself, in being king of thee,  
More great than were I king of all the world:

(II.i.131)

And at the last, just before he kills Annabella, Giovanni celebrates their love once more:

If ever after-times should hear  
Of our fast-knit affections, though perhaps  
The laws of conscience and of civil use  
May justly blame us, yet when they but know  
Our loves, that love will wipe away that rigour  
Which would in other incests be abhorr'd.

(V.v.200)

Perhaps Annabella's best lines are in her last long speech with Giovanni. She bids her brother goodbye in this fashion:

Brother, dear brother, know what I have been,  
And know that now there's but a dining-time  
'Twixt us and our confusion: let's not waste  
These precious hours in vain and useless speech.  
Alas, these gay attires were not put on  
But to some end; this sudden solemn feast  
Was not ordain'd to riot in expense;  
I, that have now been chamber'd here alone,  
Barr'd of my guardian or of any else,  
Am not for nothing at an instant freed  
To fresh access. Be not deceiv'd, my brother;  
This banquet is an harbinger of death  
To you and me; resolve yourself it is,  
And be prepar'd to welcome it.

(V.v.198)

The critics who point out that Ford gave the lovers the best poetry are correct. However, this does not mean that

Ford sympathized wholly with his characters. Incest leads Annabella to repentance, Giovanni to death. The ending of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore is a scene of horror, as Soranzo's banquet hall is strewn with the dead and the dying. It was to this that Giovanni's lust led the characters of the play. Those critics who argue that Ford was a moral anarchist should reflect more closely on the dénouement of this powerful example of Ford's tragic art: "It is not by single speeches. . .but by the conduct of the whole action that the standpoint of the author should be judged...."<sup>95</sup> In the opening lines of the play the Friar tells Giovanni that he is damned, and there is nothing later in the play to indicate that this is not the case.

It is perfectly natural that Ford should give Giovanni and Annabella beautiful lines of poetry--the lover should speak as a lover to his beloved. The test for determining Ford's position regarding the incest of the lovers must be found in the words and actions of other people in the play--and here Ford has provided positive evidence of his own views.

When Annabella returns to her chamber after her first taste of physical love, she exclaims, "What a paradise of joy/Have I pass'd over." "Nay," answers her coarse nurse, Putana, "what a deal of joy have you passed under" (II.i. 132-133). Putana is a staunch advocate of the pleasures of the bed--even if incest be involved. She cares not who the

lover should be--any man will do: "What though he be your brother? Your brother's a man, I hope; and I say still, if a young wench feel the fit upon her, let her take anybody, father or brother, all is one" (II.i.133). The speeches of the coarse old woman put an end to the glamour of Annabella's love.

Furthermore, it is especially significant that Vasques, the greatest villain in this play of villains, is amazed and horrified when told of Annabella's relationship with Giovanni: "--her own brother! O, horrible! To what a height of liberty in damnation hath the devil trained our age! her brother, well!" (IV.iii.187). Even Vasques, a murderer, is shocked by their incestuous sin.

On the other side of morality from Putana and Vasques, we have the Friar and Florio, the father of the lovers. These two men are the only characters in the play (except the minor figure Donado) who are not tainted either by sin or by gross stupidity.<sup>96</sup> The Friar is properly shocked and outraged when Giovanni reveals his crime to him. He persuades Annabella to repentance, and attempts to do the same for Giovanni. When he is unable to prevent the youth from going to Soranzo's banquet, where sudden death awaits, Bonaventura leaves the city, sorrowing that he has ever come to see such horror.

Florio, unable at first to believe his son's horrible revelation of sin, calls him "madman" (V.vi.203). Then, when

convinced of the truth of Giovanni's confession, he dies from the shock of what his children have done.

Ford has made his judgment very clear. Incest is abhorrent. Only the lovers themselves and old Putana are on the side of the lovers. From the worst and the best of the other characters--from Vasques on one hand, from Florio and Bonaventura on the other, there comes nothing but condemnation.

In the character of Giovanni himself there is sufficient proof that Ford did not give him his support. Why else did Ford make Giovanni an atheist if it were not to indicate that the youth is debased? It is quite possible that Ford and his audience would have had some pity for an unfortunate young victim of melancholy. But no seventeenth century audience would grant its support to an atheist. Nor did Ford.

Another aspect of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore which has been continually condemned is its sensationalism. That Ford does employ spectacle and sensation is impossible, and unnecessary, to deny. The important problems are to determine why he does so and whether or not the Jacobean or Caroline dramatist who uses such devices is ex officio a decadent.

Of course, the changing tastes of the audience are cited as a reason for the sensationalism of the decadent twenties and thirties. The audience, familiar with and sated by four decades of dramatic thrills, needed stronger and



stronger stimulants. This truism is merely a reason, not an excuse. To shock an audience for the mere sake of the shock has never been considered art. We must consider whether the shock of 'Tis Pity is of art or decadence.

T. S. Eliot places Ford in the decadence, maintaining that an absence of purpose in art is what prompts the poet to resort to sensation.<sup>97</sup> Eliot has said few other things which so thoroughly highlight the inadequacies and dilettantism of much of his criticism of the drama. Above all else, with the possible exception of sheer poetic power, the thing which Ford brought with him into the theatre was purpose.

The scene in 'Tis Pity which has most offended readers is V.vi.--in which Giovanni enters Soranzo's banquet-room carrying Annabella's heart on the point of his dagger. "A sane and healthy mind revolts instinctively from such scenes," wrote the Reverend J. H. B. Masterman.<sup>98</sup> H. J. C. Grierson and J. C. Smith agreed that the scene "exceeds what is legitimately probable or tolerable in drama."<sup>99</sup> Many other critics consider this scene a flagrant violation of the standards of art.

If Ford is decadent, then so are the Elizabethan masters. In using spectacle, sensation, horror Ford was merely following a time-honoured practice of the stage. What is the distinction between the two events that makes Bajazet's splattering of his brains against the bars of his cage acceptable but Giovanni's entrance with Annabella's

heart on his dagger decadent? Many readers have been repelled when Cornwall gouged out Gloucester's eyes and smashed them into jelly with his shoe. Has Ford any scene quite so horrible as that? And what is the difference between Giovanni's entrance and Macduff's entrance at Dunsinane with Macbeth's bloody head held aloft in his hand? Of course the reverend gods of the Elizabethan stage had their moments of terror and brutal sensation. They, however, are not termed "decadent;" John Ford is.

Sensationalism is acceptable, say some critics, when it is endowed with "spiritual significance,"<sup>100</sup> which is a vague enough term to serve the purposes of modern criticism. Undoubtedly, the Shakespeare idolators find immense "spiritual significance" in Cornwall's tearing of Gloucester's eyes, but they see little or none of this vital force in Ford, or Webster, or Middleton. I too find great spiritual significance in Gloucester's suffering, but by the same token I find it also in the most condemned horror scene in Ford--the one in which Giovanni bears Annabella's bleeding heart before the dinner guests.

Lord David Cecil sees nothing more in this scene than physical terror<sup>101</sup> and to Wallace Bacon it is mere melodrama.<sup>102</sup> There are better ways to look at the scene. Oliver, who once also considered Giovanni's actions melodramatic, has changed his mind; his present view is extremely interesting.

Ford had the authority of Burton, if he needed it, for believing that men acted thus under the influence of heroical love. But did he need that authority? It is a commonplace of psychology that the thinker, forced to play the part of the man of action, often acts rashly, even overacts his part; and I believe that Ford is here presenting Giovanni's actions as those natural to a man of his temperament faced with a situation that seems to him to demand that something be done. . . .

What this means, then, is that Ford is faced with the problem of showing on the stage a character who in real life would act melodramatically. He had to give a realistic presentation of melodramatic action; it has seemed to many a melodramatic presentation of reality. The difference, in drama, is very slight; and Eugene O'Neill, faced with the same problem in Anna Christie, confessed that he could not solve it.<sup>103</sup>

This is a very provocative interpretation, and there may be a measure of truth in it. To say it another way, anger and hubris have so mingled in Giovanni that he has thrown caution from him. "Tell him I dare come," he screamed to Vasques; and when Annabella warned him of the dangers to his life, he shouted, "What danger's half so great as thy revolt?" (V.v. 197). However, I think there is a better interpretation.

Mary Edith Cochnower has pointed out that one of the ideals characteristic of revenge in Renaissance Italy was "to spoil the triumph of an adversary."<sup>104</sup> As we shall see, Giovanni kills Annabella not through hatred of her, not to pay her back for her repentance--but as an act of revenge to spoil the triumph of Soranzo.

Therefore, Giovanni's dagger scene and the bloody act which makes it possible, his stabbing of Annabella, are full

of "spiritual significance," for they are two of the most glorious deeds of Giovanni's life. Annabella is not murdered, but sacrificed; her slaughter is an act of immolation. She dies to satisfy the gods of vengeance:

Thus die, and die by me, and by my hand!  
 Revenge is mine; honour doth love command.

(V.v.200)

Giovanni knows he is to die. He knows also that once he is dead, Annabella herself will have to face death and torture. It is to prevent her from falling into the hands of Soranzo and Vasques that Giovanni kills her, thereby removing her from the reach of Soranzo's fury. Just before he stabs Annabella, he tells her, "When thou art dead/I'll give my reasons for't." True to his word, he reveals the spiritual significance of his deed to his sister's corpse:

Soranzo, thou hast miss'd thy aim in this:  
 I have prevented now thy reaching plots,  
 . . . . .  
 . . .Fair Annabella,  
 How over-glorious art thou in thy wounds,  
 Triumphant over infamy and hate!--  
 Shrink not, courageous hand, stand up, my heart,  
 And boldly act my last and greater part!

(V.v.201)

This "last and greater part" is to rip out Annabella's heart and take it to Soranzo and Vasques. The sister's heart is the proof of the brother's revenge, and he bears that proof before his enemies. His bloody entrance is his moment of greatest triumph:

Here, here, Soranzo! Trimm'd in reeking blood,  
That triumphs over death, proud in the spoil  
Of love and vengeance!

(V.vi.202)

The glory of my deed  
Darken'd the mid-day sun, made noon as night.

(V.vi.202)

. . .Times to come may know  
How, as my fate, I honour'd my revenge,

(V.vi.203)

Have you all no faith  
To credit yet my triumphs? Here I swear  
By all that you call sacred, by the love  
I bore my Annabella whilst she liv'd,  
These hands have from her bosom ripp'd this heart.

(V.vi.203)

That is why Act V. Scene vi of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore is full of spiritual significance.

Despite the fact that it has been defamed as both morally and artistically decadent, and despite the fact that the Victorians could never bring themselves to pronounce the full title of the play, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore is considered by many to be Ford's greatest success, and it has proven his most popular work--a tribute to its poetry and power. It was performed twice in the Restoration, the only Ford play to be so honored--and actually only one other of his dramas seems to have reached the stage in that era.<sup>105</sup> Among the critics of the age who expressed opinions, Langbaine, despite his one important objection, rendered a favorable verdict on the play as a whole.

In 1744 Robert Dodsley reprinted the tragedy in the eighth volume of his Select Collection of Old Plays. Later in the century, Baker wrote, "I cannot help considering this play as the masterpiece of this great author's works. There are some particulars in it both with respect to conduct, character, spirit, and poetry, that would have done honour to the immortal Shakespeare himself."<sup>106</sup>

Naturally, the play was not staged by the Victorians, whether in England or America. Maurice Maeterlinck's adaptation, Annabella, was acted in Paris in 1894, but even this version did not reach England until 1923.<sup>107</sup> But several nineteenth century writers agreed with Baker's evaluation, or at least felt that the play could be highly praised. Ashley Thorndike, who was not an admirer of the dramatist, spoke ecstatically of parts of the tragedy: "The marvelous parting scene between brother and sister. . . is perfection itself. His imagination dissolves the horrible story into the very language of the breaking heart."<sup>108</sup> Havelock Ellis, whose interests lay along the lines of Ford's, thought that in 'Tis Pity the poet "touched the highest point that he ever reached. He never after succeeded in presenting an image so simple, passionate, and complete, so free comparatively from mixture of weak or base elements. . . ."<sup>109</sup>

In the past thirty years 'Tis Pity has been acted with some frequency. The French have always been fond of Dommage quelle soit une Prostituée and they had opportunities to see

it staged in 1934 and 1948. A performance was also given in London in 1934, and the play was subsequently presented in England in 1940 and 1955.<sup>110</sup> It also appeared in an off-Broadway production in the late 1950's. Modern critics, writing in a time when Ford's themes are no longer bothersome, have admired the play. Oliver thinks Ford could go no further than this in tragedy.<sup>111</sup> The Reverend Montague Summers believes it to mark the dramatist's greatest accomplishment: "There are few things of its kind more complete, more beautiful, more entirely human and pathetic!"<sup>112</sup> Parrott and Ball are struck by the potency of Ford's imagination: "Never since Webster's Duchess of Malfi had a tragic poet struck with such power the strings of pity and of terror; never again in the brief period that remained to Elizabethan drama was a playwright to do so."<sup>113</sup> Undoubtedly Ford's most powerful work and the most powerful tragedy of its immediate era is 'Tis Pity She's a Whore.

#### THE BROKEN HEART

The Broken Heart was first published, along with Ford's two other tragedies, in 1633. The title-page records that the play was acted by the King's company at the Blackfriars, but the dates of performance and composition are not known.

The prologue is as significant as Ford's usually are. The most intriguing part of it is this couplet:

What may be here thought FICTION, when time's youth  
Wanted some riper years, was known a TRUTH.

The most popular conjecture concerning the "TRUTH" behind the stage work is that Ford is dramatizing the unhappy love of Philip Sidney and Penelope Devereux.<sup>114</sup> The theory has its attractions and may be true; however, in many details there is little or no similarity between the play and the real life story. A second passage is also significant:

The title lends no expectation here  
Of apish laughter, or of some lame jeer  
At place or persons; no pretended clause  
Of jests fit for a brothel courts applause  
From vulgar admiration: such low songs,  
Tun'd to unchaste ears, suit not modest tongues.

Ford's decision to do without low comedy has been universally applauded. It would indeed accord ill with the sorrows of Penthea and the heartbreak of Calantha. There is some slight humor in the speeches of Bassanes and more especially his servant Phulas, but this is never offensive and is always minor. In The Broken Heart, then, Ford is concentrating all his powers on the four lovers whom fate and human error have doomed to unhappiness and to death.

The Broken Heart begins well. The slightly heated dialogue between the moody Orgilus and his father, Crotolon, provides a small initial conflict to engage attention and at the same time provide the listeners with the knowledge of preceding events which is necessary to enable them to understand what follows. Orgilus protests that nothing in Sparta can give him comfort since he has lost his betrothed, Penthea, through the marriage that her spiteful brother, Ithocles, made



her undertake with the old and jealous Bassanes. Now Bassanes fears Orgilus may attempt to steal Penthea from him--an act "which the gods/Know I nor dare nor dream of" (I.i.220), lies Orgilus.

That is exactly what Orgilus does dream of, and instead of leaving Sparta he adopts a disguise, becomes a student of the court philosopher, and thus is enabled to enter the palace gardens in an attempt to speak with Penthea alone. When he does, the result is one of the finest scenes in Elizabethan drama. As soon as Orgilus appears before her, Penthea crushes all his hopes and dreams:

Rash man! thou lay'st  
A blemish on mine honour. . .  
Why would you fall from goodness thus?

(II.ii.250)

After so blaming him for unwise and dishonorable conduct, Penthea denies that she can ever be his, for even though she loves him still, the demands their betrothal gave him the right to make of her have been nullified by her enforced marriage:

Have you ought else to urge  
Of new demand? as for the old, forget it;  
'Tis buried in an everlasting silence,  
And shall be, shall be ever. . .

(II.iii.251)

Orgilus protests that their betrothment has made her his:

I would possess my wife; the equity  
Of very reason bids me.

(II.iii.251)

But Penthea in turn gives him many good reasons why his wishes cannot be. She has been wrongfully betrayed into marriage--that she admits--but the deed is done and cannot be undone. She advises him further that he must think of his own honor, and safeguard it by not tempting hers. Her speech is gracious and beautiful:

How, Orgilus, by promise I was thine,  
The heavens do witness; they can witness too  
A rape done on my truth: how I do love thee  
Yet, Orgilus, and yet, must best appear  
In tendering thy freedom; for I find  
The constant preservation of thy merit,  
By thy not daring to attempt my fame  
With injury of any loose conceit,  
Which might give deeper wounds to discontents.

(II.iii.251-252)

All she can do for Orgilus is to hope that he can find happiness with another and protest that she herself will never know again the happiness she once knew in contemplation of his love. Then, at the last she bids him always think well of her. The passage is very appealing:

Continue this fair race: then, though I cannot  
Add to thy comfort, yet I shall more often  
Remember from what fortune I am fall'n,  
And pity mine own ruin.--Live, live happy,--  
Happy in thy next choice, that thou mayst people  
This barren age with virtues in thy issue!  
And O, when thou art married, think on me  
With mercy, not contempt! I hope thy wife,  
Hearing my story, will not scorn my fall.--  
Now let us part.

(II.iii.252)

Orgilus's determination remains unchanged. He repeats that she belongs to him as his wife. Knowing she must somehow force him to leave her, she shifts to heavier lines of argument. Her true love for Orgilus will not allow her to offer him "No better favours than a second bed." This reasoning Orgilus declines. And then Penthea speaks more harshly:

To confirm it;  
Should I outlive my bondage, let me meet  
Another worse than this and less desir'd  
If, of all men alive, thou shouldst but touch  
My lip or hand again!

(II.iii.252)

Now Orgilus, incredulous, begins to feel the heat of his frustrate desires. It cannot be that the woman whom he loves and who loves him could speak to him so. His words betray his disbelief in what is happening, his growing fear that Penthea is sincere in her cold words, and perhaps a little anger too:

Penthea, now  
I tell ye, you grow wanton in my sufferance:  
Come, sweet, thou'rt mine.

(II.iii.252)

And Penthea reacts with an anger she does not, cannot really feel:

Uncivil sir, forbear!  
Or I can turn affection into vengeance;  
Your reputation, if you value any,  
Lies bleeding at my feet. Unworthy man,  
If ever henceforth thou appear in language,  
Message, or letter, to betray my frailty,  
I'll call thy former protestations lust,  
And curse my stars for forfeit of my judgement.

Go thou, fit only for disguise, and walks,  
To hide thy shame: this once I spare thy life.

(II.iii.253)

Now she has succeeded in making him leave. But his brokenhearted sighing of her name--"Oh, Penthea"--as he withdraws, forces her to betray her true emotions and shows how difficult it was for her to feign such great anger and act as she did to the man she loves:

He sigh'd my name, sure, as he parted from me:  
I fear I was too rough. Alas, poor gentleman!  
He look'd not like the ruins of his youth,  
But like the ruins of those ruins. Honour,  
How much we fight with weakness to preserve thee!

(II.iii.253)

"I fear I was too rough." With all of her sorrows, Penthea can still sympathize with the unhappiness of others. She spoke unkindly to Orgilus only through necessity. In so doing the honor she preserved was not hers alone.

This compellingly beautiful and masterfully written scene is Ford's greatest, and it is one of the finest that a half century of England's golden age of drama has to offer. The strength and sincerity of the feelings involved create moments of truly exquisite pathos. And the complete credibility of Penthea's emotions, fully recognizable beneath her shifts from gentleness to severity, from her hopes for Orgilus's future happiness to the blasting of all his present desires, makes a most memorable scene of a woman's heart struggling with itself in a gallant attempt to ward off dangers in a web not of its own weaving.<sup>115</sup>

I cannot understand how any critics could call Penthea's characterization either colorless or incomplete. In the garden with Orgilus she speaks what she has to speak to protect them both. She parries all of her lover's protestations. She is soft and then severe, she is kind and then gently cruel. She does what has to be done. There is no lack of color there. Later we see others of her qualities.

When Penthea meets her brother in his chamber, she does not hesitate to let him know that he has wronged her. It has been urged that there is a trace of selfishness in Penthea, but the word is too severe. It might be urged that there is in Penthea self-consciousness of the wrongs done to her. This there is--and she has a right to every bit of it. Although Ithocles protests that his own heart is suffering for the grief that he has caused her, Penthea does not immediately forgive and forget--this is no tamed, cowed woman for all her passivity. Her brother did her great injury in breaking the betrothal contracted by their own father before his death, and she wants Ithocles to be fully cognizant of the cruelty of his actions. But she does not want his heart to break--not yet anyway:

Not yet, heaven,  
I do beseech thee! First let some wild fires  
Scorch not consume it! may the heat be cherish'd  
With desires infinite, but hopes impossible!

(III.ii.260)

Obviously, such a wish is not sincere. It is too fierce ever to have come from the heart of this woman. She does want to

hurt Ithocles a little in return for her great hurt--her human nature, her wronged self demand that much compensation. But she no more means this terrible wish than she really means those unkind words to Orgilus in the garden.

No, she does not immediately forgive. After Ithocles tells her of his love for the Princess Calantha, Penthea simply presents him the fabric of her own story:

Suppose you were contracted to her, would it not  
Split even your very soul to see her father  
Snatch her out of your arms against her will,  
And force her on the Prince of Argos?

(III.ii.263)

But as her brother pleads that he too feels the tyranny of love, her heart softens and embraces him once more: "We are reconciled," she says.

So truly noble is her character that the breach between her and Ithocles is completely sealed. It is she who carries his suit to Calantha. In Penthea's "three jewels" speech with the princess we see another aspect of the portrait of this woman. She toys admirably with Calantha. Penthea says that she has made her will, and item by item she disposes of all she has in the world--"But three poor jewels." First she wills away her youth, giving that to "virgin-wives" and "married maids." And secondly she disposes of her fame, her good name, leaving that "To Memory, and Time's old daughter, Truth." By now Calantha is quite charmed with the lady's sad fancies, and then Penthea bequeaths her last jewel to the princess--the passage is affecting:

'Tis long ago since first I lost my heart:  
 Long I have liv'd without it, else for certain  
 I should have given that too; but instead  
 Of it, to great Calantha, Sparta's heir,  
 By service bound and by affection vow'd,  
 I do bequeath in holiest rites of love,  
 Mine only brother, Ithocles.

(III.v.277-278)

Midway through the passage Penthea arrested Calantha's attention by naming her as the recipient of a gift, but the identification of the jewel itself was held in suspension until the very end. Against Calantha's astonishment she presses her suit for that "poor man," Ithocles. She reminds Calantha that she is still a sister, "though to me this brother/Hath been, you know, unkind, O, most unkind!" Having now done as much as she can for both Orgilus and Ithocles, Penthea is ready to welcome death: "My reckonings are made even; death or fate/Can now nor strike too soon nor force too late."

By the time Penthea next appears, her sadness has reached its height and broken the equity of her mind as readily as it had her heart. There is a tragic sweetness in the rhapsodies of her wandering thoughts:

Sure, if we were all Sirens, we should sing  
     pitifully,  
 And 'twere a comely music, when in parts  
 One sung another's knell:

Since I was first a wife, I might have been  
 Mother to many pretty, prattling babes;  
 They would have smil'd when I smil'd, and for certain  
 I should have cried when they cried:

(IV.ii.290)

Then finally, one brief passage of almost unbearable intensity brings the cause of her tragedy once more into full view:

O, my wrecked honour! . . .

. . . . .  
There is no peace left for a ravish'd wife  
Widow'd by lawless marriage; to all memory  
Pentheas, poor Pentheas name is strumpeted:

(IV.ii.293)

Pentheas's conclusions regarding her honor are not surprising, since she has said the same thing to Ithocles before (III.ii.261). The thing which is surprising is the extreme degree of the refinement of her sensitivity. She feels that her marriage to a man she does not love has brought dishonor to her name because she had already been promised to Orgilus. In a very real sense Pentheas did consider that she was "wife to Orgilus"--and by living in wedlock with another, forced though that marriage was, she felt that she had played the strumpet by violating her pledge of love to Orgilus. To love one man and share the bed of another--even though the act be forced--is not, as Pentheas knows, the way of honor.

Pentheas's is a full and subtle characterization. She tried to be gentle with Orgilus in the garden, and finding that more firmness than gentleness was necessary to keep Orgilus from dishonoring both himself and her, she replied with more and more harshness. Implored by Ithocles for forgiveness, she gave it--but not before she also gave some natural vents to her own suffering. And finally, that delicate nobility of soul in her which recognized that marriage was



wrong without the ennobling constituent of love did not hesitate to call adultery what a hypocritical world termed holy wedlock. Penthea is the first lady of the Elizabethan tragic stage, and she is Ford's finest accomplishment.

Penthea's husband has generally been condemned--not so much for any artist faults on Ford's part (though the character is sometimes accused of inconsistencies) as for his jealous cruelties to his wife. To concentrate merely on this aspect of the character is to do Bassanes an injustice. Even though he originally appears to be the closest thing to a villain in this tragedy without villains, it seems fairly obvious that by the end of the play he is a kind of hero in his author's eyes.

In the opening scene Orgilus explains to his father the effect Penthea has had on her husband. Her beauty has begotten in him "a kind of monster-love" which "brands all dotage with a jealousy" (I.i.219). It is to remove himself as a cause of the old man's jealousy, and thereby alleviate his harshness with Penthea, that Orgilus says he wants to leave Sparta.

When Bassanes first appears in II.i., it is immediately evident that Orgilus's description of him is correct. In a scene that may owe something to Corvino's "window-damning" in Volpone, Bassanes is caught in the ridiculous distemper of extreme jealousy:

I'll have that window next the street damn'd up;  
 It gives too full a prospect to temptation,  
 And courts a gazer's glances: there's a lust  
 Committed by the eye, that sweats and travails,  
 Plots, wakes, contrives, till the deformed bear-whelp,  
 Adultery, be lick'd into the act,  
 The very act: that light shall be damn'd up

(II.i.236)

This early in the play Bassanes's affection for his wife, despite its exaggerated expression, is touching in a way. He sincerely worships Penthea. Nor is Bassanes yet so distrustful of every man who approaches his wife that mere civility is denied him. He is a gracious enough host to those parties from the court who bring news that Ithocles, being ill, is anxious to see his sister. He speaks well on the occasion.

This is the best scene Bassanes is to enjoy before his transformation from a jealous monster in the final acts. After this scene his furious outbursts consist of name-calling and little else. But here Ford has a far better control of the character. Bassanes may even achieve some real humor when he charges Phulas to allow no message to get to Penthea (the name-calling, with its ridiculous incongruity, may even add to the comedy of the situation):

I'll tear thy throat out,  
 Son of a cat, ill-looking hounds-head, rip up  
 Thy ulcerous maw, if I but scent a paper,  
 A scroll, but half as big as what can cover  
 A wart upon thy nose, a spot, a pimple,  
 Directed to my lady. . . .

(II.i.236)

At the end of the scene, after Bassanes warns another servant that her life is dependent upon her ability to preserve Penthea's honor, he adds, "And so is mine. My agonies are infinite." His agonies are very real. Too old, too unlovely to be a natural suitor for Penthea's love, he feels how little he deserves her, how little hope he really has of winning love from her. His agonies are infinite, and there is here some sympathy in his portrayal. It remains for his melancholy to grow more severe and render him for a time little more than a raving madman.

At the court Ithocles asks to speak to his sister alone, and that "alone" is a frightening word to Bassanes. Prophilus is to escort her to her brother's chamber in an hour--alone. Suspicions crowd in rapid succession into Bassanes's frenzied brain--suspicions of incest, of adultery, of pandering, in any event, of his own cuckoldry. Fears grow in him until he can contain himself no longer; and in his madness, with part of the court at his heels, he rushes into the room occupied by Penthea and her brother and calls Ithocles "one that franks his lust/In swine-security of bestial incest." To such depths jealousy has dragged this man.

Penthea's quiet protestations of her innocence are all that is necessary to calm Bassanes, so complete is his uxoriousness. He admits that he has lost his reason:

Light of beauty,  
 Deal not ungently with a desperate wound!  
 No breach of reason dares make war with her  
 Whose looks are sovereignty. . .

(III.ii.265)

Melancholy is indeed a kind of madness.

It is to the credit of Bassanes that he immediately realizes the extent of his folly, but Ithocles refuses to allow his sister to return to her husband. Penthea's absence and his humiliation of himself in front of amazed witnesses are sufficient shocks to jar some sense of his own folly into Bassanes's muddled brain. He proposes to rid himself of the madness of jealousy:

Much wrong I did her, but her brother infinite;  
 Rumour will voice me the contempt of manhood,  
 Should I run on thus? some way I must try  
 To outdo art, and jealousy decry.

(III.ii.267)

When he next appears his reformation is underway. Now his speech to his servants is much altered in tone and much quieter in its delivery than when he ordered the window damned. And when he speaks of Penthea, he is a much different man too. Now he is full of self-reproach. Foolish in a way he still is; he is almost too eager to do penance. But he can be forgiven for this.

After Penthea's death Orgilus approaches Bassanes, and the old man speaks with some nobility of character. He quietly asks to be left alone; in his great troubles, Orgilus is the last man he wants to meet:

I beseech thee  
 With all my heart, let me go from thee quietly;  
 . . . . .  
 And if I cannot love thee heartily,  
 I'll love thee as well as I can.

(V.i.306)

This speech is a good one in the revelation of the man's character. The last two lines manifest his awareness of the great causes for hatred between himself and Orgilus. But he will try to forget those causes and learn to love his enemy as well as he can.

Later Bassanes bears the news of his wife's death to the dancing revelers celebrating the marriage of Prophilus and Euphranea, the sister of Orgilus. At the same time tidings of two other deaths arrive. It is Bassanes who cautions others to bear the weight of all these new sorrows; it is he who is now the prop and support of others:

Armestes, rent not  
 Thine arteries with hearing the base circumstances  
 Of these calamities; thou'st lost a nephew,  
 Continue man still.

(V.ii.311)

Orgilus must die in punishment for having killed Ithocles. He is his own executioner. But after opening the veins in one arm, he needs someone's aid to open those of the other. Bassanes is his factor--but not one through envy or anger:

I envy not a rival, fitted  
 To conquer in extremities: this pastime  
 Appears majestic; some high-tun'd poem  
 Hereafter shall deliver to posterity  
 The writer's glory and his subject's triumph.

(V.ii.314)

It is Bassanes who takes charge of the funeral of Orgilus. It is to this point that time has brought Bassanes--that he gives the final necessary services to the man whom he once hated above all others. His reformation is now complete, and in recognition of this fact Calantha and Ford make him marshal of Sparta.

It has been objected that Calantha's rewarding of Bassanes in this fashion is too great an honor for him and that the change which takes place in the old man is too great for credulity. However, the change was motivated carefully: Penthea's sincere statements of her innocence, Bassanes's own recognition of his great humiliation are sufficient to begin the change and it is carried systematically to the end. In overcoming melancholy by mere force of will, Bassanes achieved a great personal triumph. It is for that reason that Ford gave him the office of marshal.

Bassanes does not gain a full measure of the reader's sympathy because his great sorrows are overshadowed by many others in this play which is full of great sorrows. But the characterization of him is a full one, and dramatically a good one.

Ford's drawing of the other characters is also commendable. Orgilus the fiery avenger of Penthea; Ithocles, the brother haunted by his own cruelty; Calantha, the Spartan princess--all are among the more memorable figures of the Caroline stage.

There are no villains in this play, even though it is in a sense a tragedy of revenge. Both Ithocles and Orgilus seem at times likely to inherit the title of villain; but Ithocles is truly repentant for his wrongs to Penthea, and Orgilus kills only because Penthea's tragedy demands retribution. The scene in which Orgilus takes his revenge is striking. First Orgilus entraps Ithocles in a mechanical chair whose arms close about him. Then the fury of the avenger breaks forth:

You dreamt of kingdoms, did ye? how to bosom  
 The delicacies of a youngling princess;  
 . . .whiles Penthea's groans and tortures,  
 Her agonies, her miseries, afflictions,  
 Ne'er touch'd upon your thought

(IV.iv.304)

Ithocles does not shrink before his enemy's drawn blade:

Strike home! A courage  
 A courage keen as thy revenge shall give it welcome:  
 But prithee faint not; if the would close up,  
 Tent it with double force, and search it deeply.

(IV.iv.304)

The two young men are then reconciled. The brother, knowing the harms he caused his sister, is ready to accept death; and the lover, realizing the tortures that his former enemy is in, is eager to free him from his earthly pain:

Orgilus: Give me thy hand: be healthful in thy  
                   parting  
                   From lost mortality! thus, thus I free  
                   it. /Stabs him.

Ithocles: Yet, yet, I scorn to shrink.

Orgilus: Keep up thy spirit:  
I will be gentle even in blood; to linger  
Pain, which I strive to cure, were to  
be cruel.

Ithocles: Nimble in vengeance, Stabs him again.  
I forgive thee.  
Pentheia, by thy side thy brother bleeds;  
Orgilus: Farewell, fair spring of manhood!

(IV.iv.305)

Orgilus locks the bodies of the brother and sister in the same room: "Sweet twins, shine stars for ever!" (IV.iv.305). Then he goes to deliver himself to justice for having fulfilled his duty to the gods of vengeance. There is no villain in The Broken Heart.

The final scene of the play, in which Calantha falls dead across the body of her lover, has proved one of the more controversial moments in English drama. Calantha had danced on, seemingly unmoved, when one after another, reports came to her of the deaths of Amyclas (her father), of Penthea, of Ithocles. But now she protests that she was touched by those revelations beyond measure:

O, my lords,  
I but deceiv'd your eyes with antic gesture,  
When one news straight came huddling on another  
Of death! and death! and death! still I danc'd  
forward;  
But it struck home, and here, and in an instant.  
Be such mere women, who with shrieks and outcries  
Can vow a present end to all their sorrows,  
Yet live to court new pleasures, and outlive them:  
They are the silent griefs which cut the heart-  
strings;  
Let me die smiling.

(V.iii.318)



The princess has already placed a ring on the finger of Ithocles; now she kisses the lips of her dead lover as her heart breaks. She dies to the sound of the dirge she ordered prepared for this very occasion. "Her 'heart is broke' indeed" (V.iii.319), says Bassanes in a fitting epilogue to her sorrows.

Ford's most enthusiastic early critic, Charles Lamb, wrote ecstatically of this scene:

I do not know where to find in any Play a catastrophe so grand, so solemn, and so surprising as this. This is indeed. . .to "describe high passions and high actions." . . . What a noble thing is the soul in its strengths and its weaknesses! who would be less weak than Calantha? who can be so strong? The expression of this transcendent scene almost bears me in imagination to Calvary and the Cross; and I seem to perceive some analogy between the scenical sufferings which I am here contemplating, and the real agonies of that final completion to which I dare no more than hint a reference.<sup>116</sup>

Hazlitt was not so easily pleased, and he took direct issue with Lamb. To Hazlitt Calantha's stoicism was incredible. Of the death scene he said: "anything more artificial and mechanical I cannot conceive,"<sup>117</sup> and of the dance sequence he wrote:

. . .that she should dance on with. . . heroic perseverance in spite of the death of her husband, of her father, and of every one else whom she loves, from regard to common courtesy or appearance, is not surely natural. The passions may silence the voice of humanity, but it is, I think, equally against decorum to make both the passions and the voice of humanity give way. . .to a mere form of outward behaviour. Such a suppression of the

strongest and most uncontrollable feelings can only be justified from necessity, for some great purpose, which is not the case in Ford's play; or it must be done for the effect and eclat of the thing, which is not fortitude but affectation.<sup>118</sup>

Since Calantha's scenes are sometimes considered the masterpieces of Ford's art, and since they are by all odds the most striking of the writer's scenes--we may be pardoned the length of our citations. The controversy over the catastrophe of the play involves a central problem in the criticism of the dramatist: is his work decadent--eclat for the sake of eclat--or is it art, wrought with fine instinct and sensitivity for human emotions. Both Lamb and Hazlitt have had their followers. Two of the more dedicated of Hazlitt's disciples were W. J. Courthope and William Archer. The former thought nothing could be more "dramatically absurd" than Calantha's death.<sup>119</sup> He is welcome to his opinion, but it might still be pointed out that it is only in such a play as The Broken Heart, a drama of symbolic action, that such a scene has a chance of success. Elsewhere, it would be absurd, but dramatically it can be effective. Lamb's references to Calvary caused Archer to reply angrily to such "monstrous over-valuations."<sup>120</sup> The mention of Ford and Calvary in the same breath must have seemed a sacrilege to more than one observer; but we must never confuse criticism of the object with the object itself.

Swinburne defended the death scene. He pointed out its "unity of outward effect and inward impression" and said

that it deserved Lamb's praise.<sup>121</sup> Theodore Spencer mentioned the "unity of tone" in the closing scene and stated that in his opinion the dramatic representation of death could be carried no further without sinking into emotional opportunism.<sup>122</sup>

The golden mean in the criticism of the final catastrophe came from Schelling: "The surprising and original climax in the last act, which described in cold blood, strikes the hearer as wholly artificial and unnatural, read with the careful preparation of the preceding scenes, carries artistic conviction."<sup>123</sup> He, too, is praising the "unity" of The Broken Heart.

Schelling's comment is accurate in every respect. The scene does require that disbelief be willingly suspended. Once that is done Calantha's death is recognizable not as mere eclat but as a fitting close to this play of broken hearts.

And what of Penthea's martyrdom to Love--is it foolish and fantastic, or is it an act of "spiritual significance," the victory of self, of the undividual soul, over the falseness of those who have betrayed her and denied her the right to happiness? Penthea is extremely severe with herself, but she has the courage to recognize that in sharing the bed of a man she did not love she had been false to herself and to Orgilus, her betrothed. Penthea is a beautiful soul. She can recognize the imposition of deceit into her life. And though the hypocritical world insists "God hath joined

together" Penthea and Bassanes, Penthea says that this cannot be. Her revolt from a world of falseness is surely an act of moral (and spiritual) significance. Aesthetically, then, her death scenes are not decadent.

Preposterously enough this subtle and beautiful tragedy, so clear and so perfect in its moral message, has been taken as a sign of Ford's moral decadence. Sherman felt the play "powerfully suggests that obedience to the promptings of the heart would conform to a higher morality than passive acceptance" of the marriage bond.<sup>124</sup> When B. Ifor Evans somehow divines that "The play is one of horror with the elevation of passion and its inevitability as a substitute for a moral motive,"<sup>125</sup> we realize that one more blunder has been made. Yet Sensabaugh, who should know better, repeats the old falsehood, considering the play a powerful blow against the moral order.<sup>126</sup> His reasoning is infirm. It must rather be said that what The Broken Heart really illustrates is the cruelty of forcing marriage where love does not exist. Penthea and Orgilus were not merely lovers--they were betrothed; they were, as Orgilus said, man and wife. Certainly Ford is on their side--the love he writes of now is not that of brother and sister but of betrothed and betrothed. To separate them was cruel--that is the clear and perfect message of the play.

There can be no question of moral decadence in relation to this powerful social tragedy. The Broken Heart is rather

the most moral of Ford's tragedies. Fredson Bowers' excellent judgment that the play shows "the cruelty of the duty to revenge"<sup>127</sup> is accurate. Ithocles, hating the family of Orgilus, separated his sister from her betrothed. That was his revenge. It led to death, and death, and death.

One aspect of Ford's works which has received great praise is his songs. In the very first year of the Restoration a beautiful lyric from The Lover's Melancholy

Fly hence, shadows that do keep  
Watchful sorrows charmed in sleep

was included by John Wilson in his Cheerful Ayres or Ballads.<sup>128</sup> Several others of the poet's graceful songs have been similarly honored.

Schelling thought Ford one of the greatest lyricists of the era.<sup>129</sup> Sargeaunt believes his songs are but one more example of his brilliance as an innovator in drama: his lyrics "bear as little resemblance to the songs in other plays of the period as Ford's dramatic blank verse does to that of his fellow dramatists, and are further examples of the originality of his poetic utterance."<sup>130</sup> In specific reference to The Broken Heart Ward said that the final dirge and several other lyrics "are distinguished by exquisite tenderness and grace."<sup>131</sup> We may take special notice of this dirge, at the end of which Calantha dies:

Glories, pleasures, pomps, delights, and ease,  
Can but please  
[Th'] outward senses, when the mind  
Is [or] untroubled or by peace refin'd.

Crowns may flourish and decay,  
 Beauties shine, but fade away.  
 Youth may revel, yet it must  
 Lie down in a bed of dust.  
 Earthly honours flow and waste,  
 Time alone doth change and last.  
 Sorrows mingled with contents prepare  
                     Rest for care;  
 Love only reigns in death; though art  
 Can find no comfort for a BROKEN HEART.

(V.iii.318-319)

The song is indeed graceful, highly poetic, and very appropriate as an accompaniment for Calantha's passing and as an ending to the play.

The Broken Heart is a unique part of English dramatic literature. Perhaps the full significance of its uniqueness has only been hinted at in the three widely separated impressionistic observations which suggest that Ford's position as an innovator in English drama is worthy of new examination.

Around the turn of the century Sir Edmund Gosse stated that John Ford

in his finest plays, and pre-eminently in  
The Broken Heart, reminds us less of the more  
 glowing characteristics of the English school  
 than of other dramatic literatures--that of  
 Greece in the past, that of France in the  
 immediate future. We must emphasize that  
 severity, we might almost say that rigidity,  
 which distinguishes Ford from all other  
 English dramatists, and draws him nearer to  
 Corneille and Racine in their devotion to  
 dramatic discipline.... There is no play, then,  
 in the English language which gives the impres-  
 sion of a fine French tragedy so completely as  
The Broken Heart, with its exact preservation  
 of the unities, its serious action, its  
 observance of the point of honour, its rapid  
 and ingenious evolution of exalted intrigue.

The interpreter concluded by calling Ford's play "a performance. . .perhaps the most 'classic' in our repertory."<sup>132</sup>

From the other side of the English Channel, a quarter of a century or so later, there came agreement that Ford and his tragedy were of classic molds: "Ford, by the belief in fatality which dominates his work, joins hands with the Greeks, not by an effect of mere artistry but in virtue of a special temperament." The play with which Emile Legouis was primarily concerned when he made this statement was The Broken Heart.<sup>133</sup>

Lord David Cecil has recently re-associated Ford's name with those of the French neo-classicists: "No work in English is more intensely aesthetic in its inspiration than The Broken Heart. The very conception of the scenes is instinct with a sense of the beautiful. . . .We must go over the channel to Racine to find a parallel to its blend of classical purity and poignant emotion."<sup>134</sup> Perhaps the most significant facts to recall in this discussion are that the first tragedy of Pierre Corneille, Médée, was written in 1635 and that Jean Racine was not born until 1639. It was in 1633 that John Ford published The Broken Heart.

#### PERKIN WARBECK

Perkin Warbeck was published in 1634. It is possible that it was written anytime in the preceding six or eight years. The play differs greatly from Ford's other works. Gone from Perkin Warbeck are the intense probings of lovers'

hearts and the passionate lyrical beauty with which Ford engraved The Broken Heart and graced 'Tis Pity She's a Whore. Here, it is with a colder, more impersonal analysis that he retells the story of two kings and the helpless, misguided pretender caught between them.

The play has been criticized by some for its lack of fire and color<sup>135</sup>--it has none of the battles and less of the pageantry found in earlier histories. But these omissions have not prevented critical admiration. As early as 1812 in an article in The Monthly Review an anonymous writer, probably J. H. Merivale, said, "If any play in the language can induce us to admit the lawfulness of a comparison with Shakespeare it is this."<sup>136</sup> This view was echoed and expanded by Hartley Coleridge, who said that Perkin Warbeck "is indeed the best specimen of the historic drama to be found out of Shakespeare; and as a compact consecutive representation of a portion of English history, excels King John or the two Parts of Henry IV. It has as much unity as the dramatic history admits or requires; a clearly defined catastrophe, to which every incident contributes, and every scene advances."<sup>137</sup> Although George Saintsbury refused even to discuss the play in his literary history of the period,<sup>138</sup> many subsequent authorities have agreed that Perkin Warbeck may stand alongside Shakespeare's histories and the Edward II of Christopher Marlowe as the best products the Elizabethan age produced in the genre of the chronicle drama. T. S. Eliot even considers



the history to be Ford's greatest play.<sup>139</sup>

When Ford began work on Perkin Warbeck he did so with the realization that he was reviving the obsolete tradition of chronicle drama--as his prologue admits: "STUDIES have of this nature been of late/. . .out of fashion." It seems reasonable to assume that he might have looked back for inspiration to the finest examples of the history plays of the earlier dramatic ages, to the works of Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare. Like Perkin Warbeck, Marlowe's Edward II and Shakespeare's Richard II are tragedies of character in addition to being chronicle histories--there are "flaws" in Perkin, Edward, and Richard which lead them to destruction. Ford's play also shares the didactic qualities of the earlier histories--like Marlow and Shakespeare, Ford also has a moral to illustrate or a tenet to uphold, and Una M. Ellis-Fermor feels that Ford obviously owes his understanding of political ideas to Shakespeare.<sup>140</sup> Also, all three histories are void of low, raucous comedy.

In addition to these broad general similarities, Ford may be indebted to his predecessors for some minor stylistic matters. Gifford noted that Ford's use of asides was in the Marlovian manner;<sup>141</sup> and Mildred Clara Struble thought the following passage an example of Marlowe's dread humor:

K. Henry:	Dawbeney, Oxford,
	Urswick, must Perkin wear the crown?
Dawbeney:	A slave!
Oxford:	A vagabond!
Urswick:	A Glow-worm!

(IV.iv.191)<sup>142</sup>

I have no doubt that Ford was quite familiar with Richard II. Among other things a few verbal parallels give evidence of this. References to the lion and the sun are perhaps too conventional to be conclusive, but the similarities of a few other lines are interesting (in each case the line from Perkin Warbeck is printed first):

. . . Such is the fate of kings

(45)<sup>143</sup>

. . . such is the breath of kings

(I.iii.215)

Divide my crown and give him half-

(40)

Though he divide the realm and give thee half

(V.i.60)

A morn to Richmond, and a night to Richard

(112)

From Richard's night to Bolingbroke's fair day

(III.ii.218)

. . . an arm from heaven fights for the just

(32)

God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay  
A glorious angel: then, if angels fight,  
Weak men must fall, for heaven still guards the right.

(III.i.60-62)

We might also compare the reactions of the two Henrys toward what they consider the pretense of their opponents. Henry VII says of Perkin, "The players on the stage still, 'tis his

part;/He does but act" (112). After Richard dashes to the ground the mirror in which he has been gazing at himself, Henry IV accuses him of acting too: "The shadow of your sorrow hath destroy'd/The shadow of your face" (IV.i.292-293).

What purpose Ford may have had in bringing back a ghost from the Elizabethan stage is open to question. In the dedication he says there was "a perfection in the story" (112), but just what he was referring to is unclear. The only real hint of the dramatist's aims comes at the end of the prologue when Ford identifies the factors upon which he bases his hopes for the success of the play: "on these two rests the fate/of worthy expectation,--truth and state."

By "truth" Ford is merely referring to the actual historical events on which his play is founded. He evidently went to some pains in searching out the truth. His main sources were Thomas Gainsford's True and Wonderful History of Perkin Warbeck (1618) and Sir Francis Bacon's History of King Henry the Seventh (1622). It seems likely that he also used Hall's Chronicle (1548), Stowe's Annales of England (1580), and Speed's History of Great Britain. He may also have read Holinshed's Chronicles and William Warner's Albion's England.<sup>144</sup> The purpose behind Ford's diligent pursuit of "truth" may have been a desire to fortify and justify his comments on "state"--certainly this last word seems of great importance.

Various interpreters, concentrating upon "state," believe that Ford's theme is primarily political, that Perkin Warbeck is a criticism of the faults--in theory and in practice--of the Stuart monarchy. Despite the objections of many other responsible authorities, this interpretation is most assuredly possible.

As we pointed out in the second chapter of this study, the theory of the divine right of kings was not new to England at the time James ascended the throne--Shakespeare's Richard II is proof enough of that. But the theory was never fully congenial to the English, and no Tudor monarch had dreamed of applying it in such an extreme interpretation as James I and Charles I did during the years of Ford's maturity. It was the Stuart insistence upon that theory that led to revolution. Perkin Warbeck is a study in kingship; and in its contrast of the absolutism of James IV of Scotland and the mercy of Henry VII of England, Ford may well have been informing his audience of the superior governing policy of the Tudor house.

Charles I, the Stuart defender of the divine right of kings theory at the time Perkin Warbeck was written was, of course, Scottish by birth. And in Ford's play it is the Scottish king, James IV, who champions and abuses this theory of divine sanction. James is the absolute monarch of Scotland; he permits no voice to be raised against his. He arranges the marriage of Lady Katherine Gordon and the

pretender Perkin without her father's knowledge, and he will not allow the lady's heartbroken father a word of argument:

Do not  
Argue against our will; we have descended  
Somewhat--as we may term it--too familiarly  
From justice of our birthright, to examine  
The force of your allegiance,--sir, we have,--  
But find it short of duty!

(II.iii.149)

The hand of a king has reached into the private household of a nobleman and taken away Lord Huntley's beloved daughter. As Huntley himself admits, there is no protest that can be made against the will of a king:

But kings are earthly gods, there is no meddling  
With their anointed bodies; for their actions,  
They only are accountable to heaven.

(III.ii.163)

At another time James touches himself with the glitter of divinity. He, in all his majesty, has pity on Perkin and--

kings come near in nature  
Unto the Gods in being touch'd with pity

(IV.iii.185)

The doctrine of divine right was all the excuse that James IV needed to justify his trampling upon the feelings of Huntley and his making Lady Katherine a political chess figure--and this was the excuse with which James's descendant, Charles I, was justifying his actions and making himself day by day more hated.

Ford makes the fact quite clear that Henry VII, like James IV, is king by divine prerogative:

Your majesty's a wise king, sent from heaven,  
Protector of the just.

(III.i.158)

Mercy did gently sheathe the sword of justice,  
In lending to this blood-shrunk commonwealth  
A new soul, new birth, in your sacred person.

(I.i.118)

Furthermore, Heaven will fight to protect its emissary on earth; Henry himself says, "When counsels fail, and there's in man no trust,/Even then an arm from heaven fights for the just" (I.i.137). And at the approach of the rebels, Urswick, Henry's chaplain, reminds his king:

The powers who seated  
King Henry on his lawful throne will ever  
Rise up in his defence.

(III.i.157)

But Henry does not depend on Heaven alone. He is too practical to ever divorce his thoughts completely from this earth:

A guard of angels and the holy prayers  
Of loyal subjects are a sure defence  
Against all force and counsel of intrusion.

(I.i.120)

The love of loyal subjects is to the pragmatic Henry as great a measure of security as armed angels. And Henry is always anxious to safeguard the trust which his countrymen have placed in him. To do this he rules with mercy as well as justice.

The fact that Henry rules with mercy and a sympathetic

feeling for his people is continually emphasized by Ford. After his forces first defeat Perkin's motley army of Cornishmen, Henry laments:

O, lords,  
Here is no victory, nor shall our people  
Conceive that we can triumph in their falls.  
Alas, poor souls! let such as are escap'd  
Steal to the country back without pursuit:  
There's not a drop of blood spilt but hath drawn  
As much of mine. . . .

(III.ii.160)

After Perkin's capture, Urswick says to the pretender:

the law  
Has forfeited thy life; an equal jury  
Have doom'd thee to the gallows; twice most wickedly,  
Most desperately hast thou escap'd the Tower,  
. . . .  
. . . Yet, yet, confess  
Thy parentage; for yet the king has mercy.

(V.iii.209)

The quality of Henry's mercy seems never to be strained.

Ford's conception of Henry's rule as a reasonable and moderate one is historical. On some other matters Ford has altered history to the advantage of his English king. Bacon criticized Henry for avarice and for lack of foresight--but Ford's character is graced with precisely the opposite characteristics.<sup>145</sup> It seems evident that Henry VII is a hero in Ford's eyes. Opportunistic in policy but humane in affections and skilled in governance, Henry VII represents the practical and humanitarian qualities "which have long been the saving graces of British rule"<sup>146</sup>--the graces which Charles so sadly lacked.

Perkin, too, is a part of Ford's study of kingship. It is Perkin who possesses the physical attributes romantically envisioned in a prince. James says of him:

He must be more than subject, who can utter  
The language of a king, and such is thine.

(II.i.141)

A Prince, though in distress, his fair demeanor,  
Lovely behavior, unapalled spirit,  
Spoke him not base in blood, however clouded.

(IV.iii.184-185)

Even Henry has to admit that Perkin is "An ornament of nature, fine, and polished,/A handsome youth indeed" (V.ii.203).

The young pretender has other admirable personal qualities. His bravery is unquestioned. He loves the woman he married with a sincere affection. He treats her tenderly, and her loyalty to him in his affliction demonstrates the hold this distressed young man gains over others' hearts:

By this sweet pledge of both our souls, I swear  
To die a faithful widow to thy bed;  
Not to be forced or won: oh, never, never!

(V.iii.214)

Perkin has, then, the private virtues of a man. Furthermore, he has a fatherly love for the country he has never known but thinks to rule. When James gives the command to his soldiers: "Forage through/The country; spare no prey of life or goods," Perkin cries:



O, sir, then give me leave to yield to nature;  
 I am most miserable: had I been  
 Born what this clergyman would by defame  
 Baffle belief with, I had never sought  
 The truth of mine inheritance with rapes  
 Of women or of infants murder'd, virgins  
 Deflower'd, old men butcher'd, dwellings fir'd.  
 My land depopulated, and my people  
 Afflicted with a kingdom's devastation:  
 Show more remorse, great king, or I shall never  
 Endure to see such havoc with dry eyes;  
 Spare, spare, my dear, dear England!

(III.iv.174)

Doubtless it is true that Perkin, if king, would be a good shepherd to his people--but so would Henry VI have been. It is not enough for a king to have the soul of an angel, he must also have resolution and practicality. And these qualities Perkin does not have, as James's rejoinder indicates:

You fool your piety,  
 Ridiculously careful of an interest  
 Another man possesseth. Where's your faction?  
 Shrewdly the bishop guess'd of your adherents,  
 When not a petty burgess of some town,  
 No, not a villager, hath yet appear'd  
 In your assistance: that should make ye whine,  
 And not your country's sufferance, as you term it.

(III.iv.174-175)

Perkin, "effeminately dolent," can make no reply but this:

The experience  
 In former trials, sir, both of mine own  
 Or other princes cast out of their thrones,  
 Have so acquainted me how misery  
 Is destitute of friends or of relief,  
 That I can easily submit to taste  
 Lowest reproof without contempt or words.

(III.iv.175)

These meek words of submission and despair are from a man

who would rule a kingdom. When James responds, "An humble minded man," we realize with James that it is so. This man will never be king of England.

I have quoted passages from III.iv. at some length because I consider it the turning point in the play. Till now Perkin has enjoyed the full confidence of James, but in this scene the Scot's support begins to waver. For the first time James really doubts that Perkin is all he says he is--"Yet, Duke of York, for such thou sayst thou art" (III.iv.176). Here too Perkin is assailed by such words as "ridiculously," "whine," "effeminately dolent." After this there can be little doubt that Ford considered Perkin Warbeck unfit to bear the sceptre of a kingdom.<sup>147</sup>

Henry VII, then, will still be England's king at the end of the play. He is well qualified to be so, for combined in him are the best of the characteristics of James and Perkin. Henry rules with strength, vigor, and authority--as does James--but without misusing the authority of the crown. Henry also has compassion for his subjects--as does Perkin--but Henry's mercy is not touched with the effeminacy and impracticality of the youthful idealist. Henry, in combining wisdom with strength, justice with mercy, reigns secure. Thus, it is quite possible that this demonstration of ideal kingship was Ford's chief purpose in writing and that Perkin Warbeck might best be viewed as a lecture to the age.

However, Felix Schelling believed it likely that "Ford wrote more for the problem in identity involved than for any historical import."<sup>148</sup> This thought has been seconded, in a considerably more positive manner by Lord David Cecil; and several other analysts agree with him that "Ford. . .took little interest in the political implications of his theme."<sup>149</sup>

The "political implications" are too numerous and too pointed to be so lightly discarded--particularly in the light of The Golden Mean and A Line of Life, which are full of political references. But even so, it does seem likely that Ford was greatly interested in the problem of identity. In Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy the playwright might have read: "If an ambitious man become melancholy, he forthwith thinks he is a King, an Emperor, a Monarch. . . ." <sup>150</sup> And so it is with Perkin. Confession that he is an impostor would save his life, but Warbeck carries out his role to the end:

Death? pish! 'tis but a sound; a name of air;  
A minute's storm, or not so much: to tumble  
From bed to bed, be massacred alive  
By some physicians, for a month or two,  
In hope of freedom from a fever's torments,  
Might stagger manhood; here the pain is past  
Ere sensibly 'tis felt. Be men of spirit!  
Spurn coward passion! so illustrious mention  
Shall blaze our names, and style us Kings o'er Death.

(V.iii.216)

I think the problem of Perkin's identity was not the major element in the play to Ford. The youth has been brought up to believe he is the rightful Duke of York by

the real duke's aunt, Margaret of Burgundy. The imposture seems more the result of delusion than of self-delusion. Several of Henry's followers refer to Perkin as a pretender; but never by word nor deed does Warbeck himself show any doubt that he is all he claims to be. Ford's characterization of him is full and effective; but it is not, I think, the major consideration of this history.

The other characters, many of the minor ones included, have been skillfully delineated. Catherine Gordon is a gracious lady and a devoted wife. The epithets of "noble" Huntley and "noble" Dalyell describe them sufficiently. Perkin's followers Heron, Sketon, Astly, and John-a-Water are "a splendidly drawn quartet of 'Muddie-braynd peasants'"<sup>151</sup>-- this last character has been called "perhaps the only really humorous figure Ford ever brought upon the stage."<sup>152</sup> Frion, the secretary, is a good portrait of the cold, calculating opportunist. Henry's followers, Urswick, Oxford, and Dawbeney appear seldom, but their fierceness is memorable. The Bishop of Durham is a vivid character in his defiance of the advancing rebels and their Scottish allies. The traitor Sir William Stanley is one of the most unforgettable minor figures in any Elizabethan play. After having placed the crown on Henry's head at Bosworth Field, Stanley, the lord chamberlain, the king's right arm, plots to overthrow the Tudor house. Stanley is himself betrayed to Henry by Sir Robert Clifford, and Henry's shocked repetition of his

minister's name is a realistic little touch. As Stanley is led to execution, he asks, "May I not speak with Clifford ere I shake/This piece of frailty off?" (II.ii.144). To his betrayer, Stanley says,

I wet upon your cheeks a holy sign,--  
The cross, the Christian's badge, the traitor's  
infamy:  
Wear, Clifford, to thy grave this painted emblem;  
Water shall never wash it off; all eyes  
That gaze upon thy face shall read there written  
A state-informer's character; more ugly  
Stamp'd on a noble name than on a base.  
The heavens forgive thee!

(II.ii.145-146)

In Perkin Warbeck, even in the most minor characters, Ford was writing with his "best of art."

Recently, Professor Alfred Harbage has made the startling disclosure that he believes "Dekker wrote part of Perkin Warbeck and shaped the play as a whole. . . ."153 The historian's conclusion is admittedly impressionistic; but his argument is, as most of Mr. Harbage's are, extremely provocative.

To begin with, he notes that Perkin Warbeck is unlike anything Ford ever wrote alone; this supposes a collaborator, and he suggests Thomas Dekker. In an attempt to explain why Dekker's hand had never been suspected before, he draws an analogy with The Witch of Edmonton, saying that we should not have recognized Ford's part in that play had not his name been on the title-page, and he cites such plays as Eastward Hoe, The Knight of the Burning Pestle and Appius and Virginia

as evidence of the way in which even the strongest individual characteristics of various poets are sometimes subdued in collaborative work. Although his statement concerning recognition of Ford's part in The Witch of Edmonton is debatable and although many more examples could be given of collaborative plays in which the individual traits of the authors are discernible than could be given of those in which they are not, we may allow this point to stand.

Again linking Perkin Warbeck with The Witch of Edmonton, Harbage calls each a representative of an obsolete genre--the former of the chronicle play, the latter of bourgeois tragedy. The Witch of Edmonton, he says, has more in common with Arden of Feversham and A Woman Killed with Kindness than with the coeval Women Beware Women. This is intended to explain the excellences of the two works in question--the dramatists, conscious that their writings were in obsolete genres, proceeded with more than their wonted caution.<sup>154</sup> As far as Perkin Warbeck is concerned, this point will hold.

The next will not. Speaking of Abraham Hill's list of Dekker's plays, Harbage singles out first The Welsh Ambassador and says, "Without recourse to verbal analysis, it is easy to see Dekker in the play but difficult to see Ford"--this is, I think, inaccurate: in the scenes believed to be by Ford, the women characters, Armante and Carintha, are typical of the dramatist's young and gracious ladies. Noting on the list a title Believe it is so & tis so by

"Th. Decker," he suggests that "This would be an excellent alternate title for Perkin Warbeck." Shades of F. G. Fleay! Harbage's reasons for thinking so are that according to one of Ford's sources, Sir Francis Bacon's History of the Reign of King Henry the Seventh, Perkin was a victim of self-delusion and that "the title indicates some interest on Dekker's part in the kind of phenomenon that figures so conspicuously in the play we are considering, and it is of the proverbial cast not infrequently found among titles of chronicle plays."<sup>155</sup> Now, this seems to me to be most fanciful. First of all, Harbage has overlooked one absolutely essential point: Perkin may have been a victim of self-delusion to Bacon, but what does this really have to do with Ford? He is completely non-committal as to the reasons why Perkin believes himself the rightful King of England; therefore, Believe it is so & tis so is fully inappropriate as an alternate title for Ford's play. Furthermore, Harbage is going to tell us shortly that "Perkin Warbeck was a tour de force, consciously based upon the best models of a dramatic genre that had passed from fashion. It most nearly resembles Richard II, which illustrated that even Shakespeare could forego clowning, and let even gardeners speak with an unwonted decorum."<sup>156</sup> Now, how does this statement fit with the earlier one about the "proverbial cast" in the titles of history plays. Harbage mentions none of these titles, and I for one think they have no significance here. Certainly the

"best models" of the genre of the chronicle play, the histories of Marlowe, Shakespeare, Chapman, Jonson had no such alternate titles. If I may be pardoned a conjecture, Believe it is so & tis so sounds far more like the title of a comedy than of a dignified history--and certainly it is indecorous for such a stately processional of historical scenes as those which compose John Ford's great history play Perkin Warbeck.

Ford's history was published in 1634; however, it is quite possible that it was written a few years earlier--Harbage believes that it was. The chief sources of the play, Thomas Gainsford's True and Wonderful History of Perkin Warbeck and Bacon's history of Henry VII, were published in 1618 and 1622 respectively. There is, says Harbage, no internal evidence to indicate a date of composition anterior to 1622--in other words, the play could have been written during the period 1621-1624 in which Ford and Dekker were known to be collaborating. Harbage adds that "The character name 'Warbeck' appears in The Witch of Edmonton but not in its known source" thus suggesting that Ford was familiar with Gainsford's work as early as 1621.<sup>157</sup> Now this is hardly a fair statement to make. It is true that "Warbeck" does not appear in the source material of The Witch of Edmonton--but then neither do "Frank Thorney" or "Winifred" or "Susan" or "Cuddy Banks"--for Goodcole's tract makes no mention whatsoever of any of the personages in the romantic plot or in the



comedy of Banks and his clowns. The Justice of the Peace mentioned by Goodcole as Mr. Arthur Robinson may be the rough equivalent of Sir Arthur Clarington,<sup>158</sup> but even here the name has been altered. So far as is known, all of the play except that dealing with Mother Sawyer herself is the product of the collaborators' imaginations. Therefore, Harbage's statement is quite misleading. However, the supposition that Perkin Warbeck was written in the mid 1620's may still be valid. The play was one of seven which Ford published between 1629 and 1639. The ones which can be dated with assurance were written one or two years before their publication. Analogy would place the date of composition for Perkin Warbeck in the early 1630's. But the title-page states that the history play was "Acted (sometimes) by the Queen's Majesty's Servants at the Phoenix in Drury Lane." The word "sometimes" was used in the seventeenth century with its present meaning of "occasionally," but Harbage doubts that this is the meaning intended here: "Certainly one would not advertise the fact that his play was acted infrequently"--no, but then one should not transpose "occasionally" into "infrequently" either. Harbage construes that "sometimes" implies that Perkin Warbeck had been acted some years before 1634 and this could certainly be the case. Both Love's Sacrifice and The Broken Heart, printed in 1633, came from the press of Hugh Beeston, the publisher of Perkin Warbeck; but neither bears the words "Acted (sometimes)."

However, this is not the only mystery concerning the performances of Perkin Warbeck. Herbert's entry for the play in The Stationer's Register contains the phrase "observing the Caution in the License." It is possible that this strange entry is harmless, referring merely to some alterations or additions--similar to "(the Reformacons observ'd)" in the license of a play by Henry Glapthorne: "This Play, call'd the Lady Mother (the reformacons observ'd) may be acted." But the entry may represent the registrar's warning that the play is liable to suppression and "sometimes" could imply that performances of the play at the Phoenix had been stopped. Bentley, who presented this interpretation admits that it "raises many difficulties and is no doubt fanciful"--this is true, but it could be correct.<sup>159</sup>

Harbage sees Dekker's hand in I.ii., noting that the poet is brought to mind by the entire conception of the scene and especially by the character and speech of Huntley, evident in such a passage as

I scorn not thy affection to my daughter,  
 Not I, by good St. Andrew; but this bugbear,  
 This whoreson tale of honour,--honour, Dalyell!--  
 So hourly chats and tattles in mine ear  
 The piece of royalty that is stitch'd-up  
 In my Kate's blood, that 'tis as dangerous  
 For thee, young Lord, to perch so near an eaglet  
 As foolish for my gravity to admit it:  
 I have spoke all at once.

(I.i.124)

Harbage says, "Old Huntley, tough without and tender within, making humorous asides (both natural and genuinely funny),

jostled between love and admiration, between generous impulse and shrewd caution, is unlike anything elsewhere in Ford but like many things elsewhere in Dekker."<sup>160</sup>

As far as this goes, it seems correct; but Harbage leaves some very important things unsaid. Huntley is not the only character in the scene--is Harbage going to assign Dalyell and Katherine to Dekker also? Surely Dekker did not write Dalyell's first speech in the scene:

O, my noble lord,  
You construe my griefs to so hard a sense,  
That where the text is argument of pity,  
Matter of earnest love, your gloss corrupts it  
With too much ill-plac'd mirth.

(I.ii.123-124)

Nor, I think, did Dekker write these lines spoken by Katherine:

For respects  
Of birth, degrees of title, and advancement,  
I nor admire nor slight them; all my studies  
Shall ever aim at this perfection only,  
To live and die so, that you may not blush  
In any course of mine to own me yours.

(I.ii.128-129)

This sounds very much like a typical thought of Ford. He frequently insists that neither birth nor title is a surety of virtue. Bianca in The Fair Maid of the Inn says this same thing.

After Katherine's speech Huntley says, "Kate, Kate, thou grow'st upon my heart like peace,/Creating every hour a jubilee" (I.ii.129). Harbage thinks Dekker wrote these two lines, but this is not likely to be the case. Immediately

thereafter Katherine expresses a desire to speak a few more words to Dalyell, and I have no doubt that Ford is the author of those words:

I value mine own worth at higher rate  
 'Cause you are pleas'd to prize it: if the stream  
 Of your protested service--as you term it--  
 Run in a constancy more than a compliment,  
 It shall be my delight that worthy love  
 Leads you to worthy actions, and these guide ye  
 Richly to wed an honourable name:  
 So every virtuous praise in after-ages  
 Shall be your heir, and I in your brave mention  
 Be chronicled the mother of that issue,  
 That glorious issue.

(I.ii.129)

That is Ford's voice alone. None but Ford would write such a line as "Run in a constancy more than a compliment."

Harbage's theory is then impossible. He asks us to believe that little speeches of Huntley are by Dekker, but these come between passages that are obviously Ford's. We cannot accept the view that collaboration alternates consistently in this way.

Now, let us deal with lines spoken by Huntley himself and see whether Ford or Dekker created them. Huntley speaks to Katherine:

Thou stand'st between a father and a suitor,  
 Both striving for an interest in thy heart:  
 He courts thee for affection, I for duty;  
 He as a servant pleads, but by the privilege  
 Of nature though I might command, my care  
 Shall only counsel what it shall not force.  
 . . . . .  
 . . .Settle  
 Thy will and reason by a strength of judgment;  
 For, in a word, I give thee freedom; take it.

(I.ii.127-128)

How often we have seen the plays of Ford state that the heart must not be betrayed by enforced marriage. Florio in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore refuses to force Annabella into marriage, and The Broken Heart from first to last is a sermon in defense of the right of Penthea to choose her mate.

A typical example of Ford's style appears here in "interest in thy heart" which is similar to such phrases as "interest in. . .honour" (LC: I.ii.241) and "interest in . . . blood" (FMI: III.ii.123 and LT: II.ii.35), found elsewhere in Ford. Signs of Ford's vocabulary are spread throughout the scene: the most distinctive of these are "comforts," "fates," "chronicled," "bounty," and "craves." Furthermore, there is in the scene a heavy concentration upon such terms as reason, judgment, honour, and virtue--and when Katherine tells Dalyell,

I shall desire  
No surer credit of a match with virtue  
Than such as lives in you. . .

(I.i.129)

we must think of Ford, not Dekker.

It may be pointed out also that the opening of this scene is typical of Ford: he frequently begins a plot with a conversation between a young man and an older man: Crotolon and Orgilus in The Broken Heart, the Friar and Giovanni in 'Tis Pity, and Huntley and Dalyell in Perkin Warbeck.

Harbage continues by arguing that Ford and Dekker placed mutual restraints upon each other as they worked

together on Perkin Warbeck. He feels that Ford kept Dekker from writing an excess of clownage and that Dekker guided Ford away from weakness or awkwardness in plot structure and from colorlessness in the drawing of the minor characters. If this is true, then I wonder why it should be true of Perkin Warbeck alone. Why did the two playwrights not exercise such restraints upon each other in their various other collaborations? The Witch of Edmonton is a very successful play, but even there faults exist--and they are faults of structure and of dull clownage. In all fairness we must admit that the comedy of The Witch of Edmonton may be due to Rowley and that Ford's part in The Sun's Darling and The Welsh Ambassador may be revisions--so that the question of mutual influence may not pertain. Yet all three of these assumptions are merely conjectural, and it is quite possible that Ford and Dekker wrote together on The Sun's Darling and that some of the comedy of The Witch of Edmonton is Dekker's.

Harbage has one more point concerning the influence of Dekker on Ford. Dekker, he says, "was, for one thing, a better playwright. To watch Dekker getting a play under way is a lesson in craftsmanship." He cites The Shoemaker's Holiday as evidence of this.<sup>161</sup> Yes, Dekker was a good playwright--when time and fortune permitted, which they all too often failed to do. It seems that in 1623-1624 Dekker and Ford were producing plays right and left. Five of their collaborations, The Welsh Ambassador, The Sun's Darling, The

Fairy Knight, The Bristow Merchant and Keep the Widow Waking were written during this period. If Harbage wishes to date Perkin Warbeck between 1622-1625, then he has some more explaining to do--for it was no hasty composition; it was written with care and at an unhurried pace. Ford sometimes had trouble continuing a play once it had been begun, and we may think that in at least The Fancies Chaste and Noble, and perhaps Love's Sacrifice, he had some trouble ending them; but Ford did know how to do one thing: he knew how to start a play--'Tis Pity is indication of this.

But, we are told now that Perkin Warbeck lacks "Ford's typical intensity" and that "Dekker was notoriously lacking in intensity."<sup>162</sup> However, Perkin Warbeck has as much and more intensity than The Lady's Trial and The Fancies and The Lover's Melancholy. If I am told that these are comedies not histories, then I must answer that we have no histories from Ford with which to compare Perkin Warbeck--except perhaps the Harbage-Howard-Ford production of The Duke of Lerma. And I might also say that none of Shakespeare's histories (except Richard III) have the intensity of Shakespeare's tragedies.

Finally, Harbage allies Dekker with Shakespeare, for they, unlike Ford, maintained "an over-all consistency in the selection and emphasis of material that validates, in the only acceptable way in which it can be validated, the principle of the dulce et utile as applied to art." Dekker, then, lacks the sentimentalism of Ford--Lady Katherine Gordon suffers for

love, but that suffering is not "invested with an appeal per se. In the case of Lady Katherine the stress is not upon the assertion of the principle of fidelity. Thus, she is nearer kin to Dekker's *Bellafront* than to Ford's *Calantha*."<sup>163</sup>

Again Harbage leaves too much unsaid. So far as we know Ford was one of the most original of the Elizabethans; his plots seem to have been his own inventions. But Perkin Warbeck, a chronicle play, is an exception to this rule. And in this chronicle play Ford is dealing with events on a large scale; he is writing of

A history of noble mention, known,  
Famous, and true; most noble, 'cause our own  
Not forg'd from Italy, from France, from Spain,  
But chronicled at home; as rich in strain  
Of brave attempts as ever fertile rage  
In action could beget to grace the stage.  
We cannot limit scenes, for the whole land  
Itself appear'd too narrow to withstand  
Competitors for kingdoms. . .

There we have sufficient explanation for the absence in the play of a theme dealing with melancholic or illicit love. Such a love had no place in the history, and we do not need to suppose Dekker to justify its absence. In particular, A Line of Life shows Ford's interest in political affairs. In Perkin Warbeck he chose to concentrate upon the broad political contest and upon the figure of Perkin. To add to the characterization of his young hero, Ford gave him the kind, gracious, loving Lady Katherine Gordon as wife. Perkin's cause is aided by the fact that such a woman places credence in it--never doubting Perkin, never questioning her love,



Lady Katherine never borders on an affair with Dalyell or anyone else, never suffers from unrequited passion. Ford's purposes in this play were best served by having a happy pair of lovers--not such sufferers as Giovanni and Annabella or even Auria and Spinella.

The fact that Ford was for once working with source materials may explain other things too. For one, it may explain the firmness of structure in the play. Some of it Ford still had to imagine, but much of his plot was available in the pages of history spread before him as he wrote. In many cases he followed his sources very closely. Again, we do not need to suppose that it was Dekker who "shaped the play as a whole." Henry VII, Perkin, Gainsford, and Bacon helped Ford to do that.

It only remains now to state the obvious fact that there is no external evidence whatsoever which even hints that John Ford was not the author of Perkin Warbeck. His name does not appear on the title-page, but neither does it appear on the title-page of The Broken Heart and several other plays. However, in each of these cases the poet's customary anagram Fide Honor does appear, and the dedications are clearly signed "John Ford." Where Perkin Warbeck is concerned, there are five commendatory poems still extant which are addressed to the author, John Ford. There is not the slightest suggestion in any of these poems that Ford had a collaborator. This is not conclusive of course--but it

does add to the evidence for the single authorship of the history play.

Harbage has now made very astounding comments about Ford in connection with The Duke of Lerma and Perkin Warbeck. In his essay on the latter play he clarifies his reasons for doing so: "I am not really trying to establish property rights in these plays. But neither am I playing a game of give-and-take simply to create a disturbance. It strikes me that the only value that discussions of authorship can have resides in their clarification of critical issues, and in their encouraging us to come to decisions about what individual authors were like." Very well, but it seems to me that "property rights" are of some importance, and that Ford's right to Perkin Warbeck should not be challenged without some very strong evidence.

It is difficult to refute Harbage's evidence in support of Dekker only because he has presented none. Therefore, it is extremely distressing to see Arthur Brown expressing such subjective approval as he did in his review for The Year's Work in English Studies for 1959; Brown says that Harbage has written "fascinatingly and sensibly" on the authorship of Perkin Warbeck and that "The case he makes out for Dekker will certainly have to be taken very seriously." Now, I most certainly agree that Harbage has written "fascinatingly" (though, personally, I was, to borrow Ford's word, "thunder-strook" more than fascinated)--but I strongly

question the rest of Brown's observation. And I hope that many more will do so, too--until Harbage can provide considerably more evidence than he has done.

Harbage begins by admitting that his conclusions are impressionistic, and he registers his faith in critical impressions. So do I. And it is my impression that John Ford wrote I.ii. and all the rest of Perkin Warbeck.

### THE FANCIES CHASTE AND NOBLE

The unsuccessful comedy The Fancies Chaste and Noble was registered at the Stationers on February 3, 1638, and was published later that year. The title-page mentions performance "by the Queenes Majesties Servants, at the Phoenix in Drury-lane." This reference helps to date the play: it must have been written and performed before May 1636, when Queen Henrietta's men ceased to occupy the Phoenix.<sup>164</sup>

It is an unfortunate commentary on the quality of The Fancies that one of the most interesting aspects of it is the controversy over the date of original composition. A date as early as 1631 was originally suggested by Fleay, who thought that a line--"Has he any fancies in him? Can he ravish the ladies?" (I.ii.283)--from James Shirley's Changes, or Love in a Maze, licensed January 10, 1632, was intended as a satire of Ford's play.<sup>165</sup> The line could be a reference to The Fancies, but by itself it is far too slight to justify such a conclusion.

However, S. Blaine Ewing believes Fleay's assumption correct, and he has added considerable fuel to the controversy. In Ewing's opinion Shirley uses the word "fancies" in Changes to refer precisely to the ability to ravish ladies--a definition not found in Henry Cockram's The English Dictionarie of 1623 nor elsewhere in contemporaneous literature, not even in Shirley, who also uses the word in The Gamester and The Example, but not with such a meaning.<sup>166</sup> As Ford uses "fancies," it does not actually have anything to do with ravishing ladies, but "the Fancies" are a group of ladies whose virtue is under suspicion, so perhaps Ewing's contention is acceptable on this score. At any rate this part of his argument is not really worth quibbling over. He has more.

Ewing continues by pointing out that in Changes Caperwit, a young poet, is called a "fresh innamorato" (I.ii.281), "Democritus" (III.i.317), and "phantasma" (V.ii.353). Although all three of these terms "have a general application to the gallant conceited lover type", the first two may be associated specifically with Ford.<sup>167</sup> Sherman long ago expressed his belief that William Hemmings Elegy on Randolph's Finger classifies Ford as an innamorato,<sup>168</sup> and in The Lover's Melancholy Ford refers to Democritus (Burton). Ewing provides no explanation of the significance of "phantasma."

The analyst also feels that Caperwit satirizes Ford's use of masques and dances in his plays. A dancer tells

Caperwit, "A masque will be delightful to the ladies, and the poet answers:

Oh, sir, what plays are taking without these  
Pretty devices? Many gentlemen  
Are not, as in the days of understanding,  
Now satisfied without a jig, which since  
They cannot, with their honour call for after  
The play, they look to be serv'd up in the middle:  
Your dance is the best language of some comedies,  
And footing runs away with all; a scene  
Express'd with life of art, and squared to nature,  
Is dull and phlegmatic poetry.

(IV.11.339)

In The Lover's Melancholy and The Fancies masques are "serv'd up in the middle." I am only surprised that Ewing did not try to make something significant out of Caperwit's question to a young lover, which occurs only a few lines later:

"Yongrave, how is't man? what! art melancholy?"

Finally, Ewing contends that Caperwit's description of himself is a caricature of Ford:

Sir, I have a great ambition to be of your acquaintance. I hope you will excuse these fancies [that word again] of mine; though I were born a poet, I will study to be your servant in prose: yet, if now and then my brains do sparkle, I cannot help it, raptures will out, my motto is, Quicquid conabor--the midwife Wrapt my head up in a sheet of Sir Philip Sidney; that inspired me: and my nurse descended from old Chaucer. My conversation has been among the Furies, and if I meet you in Apollo, a pottle of the best ambrosia in the house shall wait upon you.

(I.11.284)

It will be best that I quote Ewing's comments on this passage lest the incredulous reader think I write in jest and blame me for them. Ewing says, "This applies point by point to

Ford, and to no other contemporary so exactly. At the time it was spoken on the stage Ford had just been giving public expression to a similar petulant self-exteem in the Epilogue to The Lover's Melancholy. . . . His indebtedness to Sidney's Arcadia is well known, all his nurses use language even more indecent than dramatic custom allowed, and the dialogue of many of his characters is "among the Furies."<sup>169</sup> These analyses have been called "suggestive" but "not entirely convincing" by G. E. Bentley.<sup>170</sup> To me they seem preposterous. First of all, The Lover's Melancholy had not "just" appeared--the play was licensed more than three years before Changes. Ford's debts to Sidney are of a general nature, and little specific influence can be pinpointed. Furthermore, as an example of Ford's nurses, Ewing directs us in a footnote to Kala of The Lover's Melancholy. Kala is not actually a nurse, she is a waiting-maid according to the Dramatis Personae. And her speech is far from being "more indecent than dramatic custom allowed."

There is no consistency in Ewing's argument. At one point, when he is criticizing plays with masques, Caperwit is supposedly satirizing Ford. Yet, at another time, when he is describing himself, he is supposed to represent Ford. This hardly seems the proper way for Shirley to handle an attack on Ford, if he wished to do so. Caperwit cannot "be Ford" at one time and then be anti-Ford at another.

Ewing also thinks that Ford later took revenge on

Shirley. He calls attention to the Prologue of The Fancies, which he believes was written at the time of publication in 1638 rather than at the time of performance, which he has placed in 1631:

The Fancies! that's our Play; in it is showne  
 Nothing, but what our Author knowes his owne  
 Without a learned theft; no servant here  
 To some faire Mistris, borrowes for his eare,  
 His locke, his belt, his sword, the fancied grace  
 Of any pretty ribon; nor in place  
 Of charitable friendship, is brought in  
 A thriving Gamester, that doth chance to win  
 A lusty summe, while the good hand doth ply him,  
 And Fancies, this, or that, to him sits by him.  
 His free invention runnes but in conceit  
 Of meere imaginations: there's the hight  
 Of what he writes, which if traduc'd by some,  
 'Tis well (he sayes) he's far enough from home.  
 For you, for him, for us, then this remains;  
 Fancie, your own opinions for our paines.

It is logical to accept with Ewing the probability that Ford is referring to Shirley's The Gamester, licensed in 1633 and "printed some time after November 15, 1637, just at the time that The Fancies was being prepared for the press." According to Ewing, Ford would have singled out The Gamester for this reason and also because it was Shirley's most notable success-- King Charles called it "the best play he had seen for seven years" when it was presented at court in 1634. Ewing explains the last four lines of the prologue in this way: "If somebody maligns his play, Ford continues, that makes no difference, for the maligner is so far away that his remarks can scarce affect us." In 1638 Shirley, "the maligner," was in Ireland, and it was 1640 before he returned permanently to England.<sup>171</sup>

Now the highly important matters which Ewing and Bentley fail to mention, ones which they cannot afford to overlook, are that Ford published Love's Sacrifice in 1633 and that James Shirley wrote a commendatory poem, "To My Friend, Master John Ford," expressly for the occasion. The reference therein to William Prynne and Histrionomastix, published in 1632, fixes the date of the writing of the poem as 1632-1633, right where the publishing date of Ford's play indicates that it should be. Thus, what Ewing asks us to believe is that Ford and Shirley were enemies in 1631, friends in 1632-1633, and enemies again in 1637. That is possible, of course; but it does no credit to either playwright.

Felix Schelling also thought that there was "a clear gird" at The Gamester in Ford's prologue.<sup>172</sup> But both he and Ewing have put a harsher construction on the lines than is necessary. Ford begins by denying that he is guilty of any literary theft--he has not, for instance borrowed the device of a successful gamester (is this not, then, a compliment to the popularity of his friend's play?).

Ewing also misreads the last few lines. Being confused by the pronouns, he concludes that Shirley is the poet far from home. Gifford thought that Ford was intended in this line,<sup>173</sup> and this is almost surely the fact. If Ford were attempting to gird Shirley with satiric references, would he admit that Shirley was so far away from home that



the satire could have no effect on him? Of course not. Therefore, the next to last line must read: "For you /the audience/, for him /Ford/, for us /the actors/ then this remains."

This reading also indicates that the prologue was not composed merely for the printed edition--it seems expressly designed for delivery by an actor. This supposition does not fully preclude Ewing's, but it does seem that if the lines were written solely for readers rather than for listeners Ford would not have worded it as he did--with the stage implicit in practically every line. I suspect that the capitalizing and italicizing of "Gamester" and other words represents Ford's sole concessions to the printed copy.

Bentley notes that Shirley had been at one time the principal writer for Henrietta's men, the company which acted The Fancies, but that Changes was written for a rival company at the Salisbury Court theatre.<sup>174</sup> This could provide a reason for rivalry between the two poets, but this is merely a possibility and cannot be presented as evidence.

A date of 1635-1636 for The Fancies is more acceptable. Secco's statement that "an old man of one hundred and twelve stood in a white sheet for getting a wench of fifteen with child" is surely a reference to Old Parr. Reputed to be 152 years old in 1635, Parr and his exploits were popularized when he was brought to court in that year. John Taylor's pamphlet The Old, Old, Very Old Man, published in 1635, related

the incident of Parr's standing in a white sheet outside a church as punishment for lechery at the age of 105.<sup>175</sup> Ford could have heard of this event before Taylor's pamphlet appeared in December, but in all probability not before the old man's arrival in London in September made his name and life common knowledge.

Possible similarities between the concluding masque of The Fancies and the second antimasque of Davenant's Triumphs of the Prince D'Amour, registered February 19, 1636, and performed at the Middle Temple on the following February 23 or 24 also indicate a late date of composition. As a member of the Temple, Ford could have seen Davenant's production.<sup>176</sup>

The final reason for thinking 1635-1636 a likelier date than 1631 is that The Lady's Trial was definitely being written in 1637-1638. Both plays are comedies, of a social nature--and there are similarities in theme, style, and technique which indicate that they were composed not long apart. In 1631 Ford was evidently involved with his tragedies, far different plays from The Fancies. The Lover's Melancholy of 1628 is a comedy; but it is a highly romanticized mood-play, and The Fancies differs almost as much from it as from one of the tragedies.

Bentley thinks it possible that The Fancies was originally composed in 1631 and revised in 1635 or 1636, but he does not consider this likely.<sup>177</sup> Nor do I. A date of composition close to that of The Lady's Trial seems most

advisable for The Fancies.

The Fancies Chaste and Noble vies with The Queen for the distinction of being Ford's worst play. Happily, it loses the contest. No critic has ever expressed complete admiration for the play, but most have noted that it does have considerable worth. Gifford's comment is typical: "it is the plot in which I think the poet has failed; the language of the serious parts is deserving of high praise, and the more prominent characters are skilfully discriminated and powerfully sustained. The piece, however, has no medium; all that is not excellent is intolerably bad."<sup>178</sup> There is nothing to disagree with in that statement, and the accuracy of his praise of the main characters is in itself enough to raise this play above The Queen.

The main story of Castamela's plights has considerable attraction.. Castamela has been called "one of the most interesting" figures in Ford's plays.<sup>179</sup> This may be an overstatement, but it is no great one. In her struggle to uphold her honor and at the same time not ruin her brother's chances for fortune, she does both catch and hold the reader's attention. Her brother, Livio, is only slightly inferior to his sister. At the beginning he is eager to see his sister placed among the Fancies, a group of young women attendant upon Octavio, the Marquis of Sienna, for this will help his chances for preferment in the marquis's services. But as soon as he realizes that his sister's honor is endangered,

he gives up all desires for personal fortune.

In her opening scene she appears to advantage as she gently, but firmly, declines the hand of Romanello. When he grows both indignant and insulting, she holds him in his place:

Romanello:           My grief you are;  
                           For all my services are lost and ruin'd.  
 Castamela:       So is my chief opinion of your worthiness,  
                           When such distractions tempt ye: you  
                                   would prove  
                           A cruel lord, who dare, being yet a servant,  
                           As you profess, to bait my best respects  
                           Of duty to your welfare; 'tis a madness  
                           I have not oft observ'd. Possess your  
                                   freedom,  
                           You have no right in me: let this suffice;  
                           I wish your joys much comfort.

(I.iii.239)

After her brother takes her to the court of Octavio, she faces a new problem: the old marquis is not, it seems, impotent--as Livio was led to believe by Troylo-Savelli, nephew of Octavio, when he entrusted his sister to the nobleman's care. Octavio makes her an offer of what he terms "a noble courtesy," but Castamela places a different construction on it:

                  A courtesy!--a bondage:  
 You are a great man, vicious, much more vicious  
 Because you hold a seeming league with charity,  
 Of pestilent nature, keeping hospitality  
 For sensualists in your own sepulchre,  
 Even by your lifetime, yet are dead already.

(III.iii.283)

Livio begins to suspect that he has been duped by Troylo, and he resolves to quit the marquis's service and take

his sister back with him to the poverty they have always known. But surprisingly she refuses to go. Trusting in her own virtue, she is determined to see her difficulties through rather than cost her brother his opportunity for success. However, he misunderstands her purposes. Thinking that she has been corrupted by the lustful dalliance of the court, he departs from her in a fury, determined that she shall marry Romanello.

Castamela is saved from that marriage when Ford breaks the back of his plot<sup>180</sup> and resolves all the problems with a series of surprises. Octavio discloses that the young Fancies, who have been suspected of being his mistresses, are really his nieces, "the daughters/To my dead only sister" (V.iii.320). When Romanello takes one look at the beautiful young Fancies, he fancies that he would like one and gives up all claims to Castamela. At that point then Troylo and Castamela vow their love for each other. To us and to Livio, she asks, "O, excuse/Our secrecy"--a service which we are not quite willing to perform, for this development has "nothing at all to do with character. Even Castamela has become a puppet and surprise is all."<sup>181</sup> But the lovers, who have--unknown to us--been lovers through most of the play have each other at last; and every one is happy--except Romanello. Octavio tries to soothe his hurt feelings by explaining the various schemes of the play to him (if we are to learn of this plot, we had best listen too):

Romanello: we examined  
 On what conditions your affections fix'd  
 And found them merely courtship; but my nephew  
 Lov'd with a faith resolv'd, and us'd his policy  
 To draw the lady into this society,  
 More freely to discover his sincerity;  
 Even without Livio's knowledge; thus succeeded.  
 And prosper'd:--he's my heir, and she deserv'd him.

(V.iii.319)

The distressful situation of Flavia in the second plot is truly affecting. When her husband Fabricio went bankrupt, he felt that she would not stand poverty with him. Therefore, in open court he swore that he had made a precontract with another woman and disowned his wife without ever consulting her on the matter. Thus, he gave her the freedom that he felt she wanted, but legally he made her appear to be his "strumpet/In best sense an adultress." Fabricio's rashness has cost her greatly: "Mine only brother, shuns me, and abhors/To own me for his sister" (II.i.250).

To save her name Flavia has remarried. But she still loves her first husband; and when one day he comes to her to ask for money, their meeting is an emotional crisis for her (Ford did begin with a good idea for a story). First, since there are other people present, she feigns cruelty to him; but when they are alone, the situation is very poignant: "she lays before him with scrupulous accuracy, but incomparable dignity, her past love for him, and his utter worthlessness which has betrayed her to shame and sorrow":<sup>182</sup>

Flavia: Did I complain?  
 My sleeps between thine arms were even  
 as sound,  
 My dreams as harmless, my contents as  
 free,  
 As when the best of plenty crown'd our  
 bride-bed.  
 Amongst some of a mean but quiet fortune,  
 Distrust of what they call their own, or  
 jealousy  
 Of those whom in their bosoms they possess  
 Without control, begets a self-unworthiness;  
 For which through fear, or, what is worse,  
 desire  
 Of paltry gain, they practise art, and  
 labour  
 To pander their own wives; those wives,  
 whose innocence,  
 Stranger to language, spoke obedience  
 only;  
 And such a wife was Flavia to Fabricio.  
 Fabricio: My loss is irrecoverable.  
 Flavia: Call not  
 Thy wickedness thy loss: without my  
 knowledge  
 Thou sold'st me. . . .

(II.i.249-250)

But she gives him the money he asks for. Then her new husband, Julio, enters and she must again feign a disgust for Fabricio which she will never really feel.

In a later scene Fabricio hints that he is withdrawing from the world to enter a monastery, and Flavia is forced once more to duel with her emotions. To hide her real feelings, she pretends not to understand:

Fabricio: I am traveling  
 To a new world.  
 Flavia: . . . . .  
 New world! where's that I pray? Good,  
 if you light on  
 A parrot or a monkey that has qualities  
 Of a new fashion, think on me.

(III.ii.272)

Ford never lacks pathos, and Fabricio's reply is very touching-- at least it is to the woman who loves him:

Yes, lady,  
I, I shall think on you; and my devotions,  
Tender'd where they are due in single meekness,  
With purer flames will mount, with free increase  
Of plenty, honours, full contents, full blessings,  
Truth and affection 'twixt your lord and you.  
So, with my humblest, best leave, I turn from you:  
Never, as now I am, t'appear before ye.  
All joys dwell here, and lasting!

(III.ii.272)

Now, as he turns to leave, Flavia can no longer hold back her tears. In "one of the most memorable scenes in Ford,"<sup>183</sup> she turns to Julio and dissembles:

Flavia: Prithee, sweetest,  
Hark in your ear,--beshrew't, the brim of  
your hat  
Struck in mine eye,--Aside Dissemble,  
honest tears,  
The griefs my heart does labour in,--  
it smarts  
Unmeasurably.

Julio: A chance, a chance; 'twill off,  
Suddenly off: forbear; this handkercher  
But makes it worse.

Camillo: Wink, madam, with that eye;  
The pain will quickly pass.

Vespucci: Immediately;  
I know it by experience.

Flavia: Yes, I find it.

(III.ii.272-273)

Later, when she hears that Fabricio has become a monk, she says simply: "He's now dead to the world/And lives to heaven; a saint's reward reward him!" (V.iii.318). This passage "is not as successful in suggesting silent griefs as Ford's quiet comments usually are; it implies rather inadequacy of feeling,"<sup>184</sup> criticizes Oliver. His comment



is a bit too harsh.

The comic characters in The Fancies are among the most disagreeable in Ford's plays. They seem to be proof of most of the charges leveled against the poet's comedy in the century and a half since Francis Jeffrey and William Gifford emphatically denounced this aspect of his work. The attempts at humor do fail to be funny in most cases, and the language is vulgar in the extreme--it hinges on impotence and many remarks are very pointed. Furthermore, part of the comic situation is incredible. Spadone, angry at Nitido for teasing him about his impotence, tries to get his revenge by telling Secco, the barber, that Nitido has cuckolded him. When the truth comes out, Secco turns his fury against the man who had tricked him. For Spadone then to go to Secco for a shave is somewhat feeble-minded on his part--the barber's razor comes very close to his throat before all the differences are resolved.

But Ford's comic parts are not "all utterly bad" as Jeffrey maintained in The Edinburgh Review in 1811<sup>185</sup>--not even in The Fancies is the attempted humor always a failure. However, that stream of opinion which Professor Esmond Marilla is fond of calling "the inertia of criticism" swept all dissent before it for nearly a hundred years--Ford was "a man, from whom nature has withheld all perception of the tones and attitudes of humour;" his low comedy was "the most contemptible of any in our pre-Restoration drama" and it was also "an

offense above all things to art."

In 1897 in an obscure and now forgotten work William Minto achieved an insight into the reasons for the frequent poverty of the playwright's comedy. The main cause of Ford's failure was, he said, "his want of sympathy with his low-comedy puppets. He makes them express themselves as if he disliked them and wished to make them odious and contemptible."<sup>186</sup> The significance of the statement may not be perfectly clear, but Leech expands it: Ford "presented his comic characters as foils to the nobility, his elect.... This appears most notably in The Fancies Chaste and Noble."<sup>187</sup> Certainly the scabrous talk of Octavio's servants is opposed to the pure language and actions of Castamela, Livio, and Troylo; while the Flavia story, with the lady's ridiculous would-be "cavalieri servente," falls somewhere in between.

We shall notice only two passages from the "comedy" of the play. The first is Flavia's:

Sure, in some country  
Ladies are privy-counsellors, I warrant ye;  
Are they not, think ye? there the land is doubtless  
Most politicly govern'd; all the women  
Wear swords and breeches, I have heard most certainly:  
Such sights were excellent.

(II.ii.252)

This has been taken as satire of "the influence supposed to be possessed by some of the ladies of Charles's court."<sup>188</sup> In the second there is some humor; it begins with Romanello's boast of his great prowess with the ladies:

Romanello: Yes, I have lov'd a score at once.  
 Spadone: Out, stallion! as I am a man and no man,  
 the baboon lies, I dare swear, abominably.  
 Secco: Inhumanly.--Keep your bow close, vixen.  
 Morosa: Beshrew your fingers, if you be in Pinches Morosa  
 earnest!  
 You pinch too hard; go to; I'll pare  
 your nails for't.  
 Spadone: She means your horns; there's a bob for  
 you!  
 Clarella: Spruce signor, if a man may love so many,  
 Why may not a fair lady have like privilege  
 of several servants?  
 Romanello: . . . . . The learned differ  
 In that point; grand and famous scholars  
 often  
 Have argu'd pro and con, and left it  
 doubtful;  
 Volumes have been writ on't. If, then,  
 great clerks  
 Suspend their resolutions, 'tis a modesty  
 For me to silence mine.

(III.iii.278)

This is harmless enough, but all too often in The Fancies  
 Ford does depend on comedy of a far lower nature.

Of the play Oliver says, "I should be surprised to  
 learn that it was not popular, for in spite of the Prologue  
 it seems more than any other of Ford's plays to have been  
 written down to popular taste."<sup>189</sup> Perhaps this also helps  
 to explain the type of comedy used here. Certainly in The  
Fancies Chaste and Noble Ford was giving his audience a kind  
 of comedy which he had expressly denied the "vulgar" in The  
Broken Heart and the "multitude" in Perkin Warbeck.

### THE LADY'S TRIAL

The comedy entitled The Lady's Trial is Ford's last work for the stage. It was licensed at the office of the Master of the Revels on May 3, 1638, and was acted later that month "by both their Majesties Servants at the private house in Drury Lane" (the performers were the King and Queen's Young Company or Beeston's Boys, organized at the Cockpit in 1637). Henry Sheapard entered the play at the Stationer's Register on November 6, 1638, and it was published the following year.<sup>190</sup> Besides 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, this is the only one of Ford's plays known to have been revived during the Restoration; Pepys records his attendance at a performance of the play given at the Duke of York's playhouse on March 3, 1669.<sup>191</sup>

In his criticism of Love's Sacrifice R. J. Kaufman maintained that what Ford had yet to learn was that "the noble lover and the jealous lover must be one and the same."<sup>192</sup> Since Ford is greatly, perhaps primarily, interested in what people think and say, the combining of the two lovers would be of great advantage to him. Auria, the noble and jealous husband of The Lady's Trial, is such a character as Kaufman thought Ford should create.

Ford leads up to Auria's trial of his lady, Spinella, with care--in the main plot he has written skillfully and interestingly. Auria has married a much younger woman despite the advice of his best friend Aurelio. Now Auria

must depart for the wars and leave his wife behind alone.

The dramatist emphasizes the necessity for Auria's actions:

My wants do drive me hence.

I am sunk so low  
In my estate, that, bid me live in Genoa  
But six months longer, I survive the remnant  
Of all my store.

(I.ii.15)

But Aurelio thinks the departure a great danger:

but you have a wife, a young,  
A fair wife; she, though she could never claim  
Right in prosperity, was never tempted  
By trial of extremes; to youth and beauty  
Baits for dishonour and a perish'd fame

(I.i.16)

and he reminds Auria that the misfortunes he warned of before  
have come about:

[I] . . . late and early often said, and truly,  
Your marriage with Spinella would entangle  
As much th' opinion due to your discretion  
As your estate: it hath done so to both.

(I.i.16)

Auria admits, "I find it hath"; but he has faith in Spinella  
and in the holiness of marriage ties: "She's my wife." On  
the other hand, Aurelio is very suspicious of a woman's  
frailties; to him all women are by nature weak and susceptible  
to temptation.

. . . it is not manly done  
To leave her to the trial of her wits,  
Her modesty, her innocence, her vows:  
This is the way that points her out an art  
Of wanton life.

(I.i.17)

But Auria's decision is unchanged. "Necessity must arm my confidence," he says as he departs for the war.

This opening scene is manly and well written. The problem has been presented squarely. Auria expresses great assurance of the fidelity of his wife; Aurelio has absolutely none of this assurance. The Lady's Trial, as I see it, is a serious social comedy, debating whether the foundation of marriage should be suspicion or trust. We shall not be modernizing Ford too much if we argue that he believed in the latter.

Oliver, who thinks Auria not a fully ideal character, says of this scene: "There is from the beginning this suggestion that Auria is partly to blame for what follows; and he himself accepts Aurelio's advice to the extent of giving Spinella a full caution about her behaviour during his absence lest it be misinterpreted."<sup>193</sup> For once at least, Oliver has erred. The scene in which Auria meets with Spinella precedes his debate with his friend.

Aurelio's prediction proves partially true--Spinella is tempted. In II.iv. Spinella and Adurni, a young profligate, are alone in a room of his house. The scene begins with a beautiful lyric blatantly pleading "carpe diem." As soon as the song is over, Adurni makes his plea for favor:

My honours and my fortunes are led captives  
In triumph by your all-commanding beauty;  
And if you ever felt the power of love,  
The rigour of an uncontrolled passion,

The tyranny of thoughts, consider mine,  
In some proportion, by the strength of yours;  
Thus may you yield and conquer.

(II.iv.41)

He repeatedly presses her to grant his desires, but each time Spinella spurns him:

Auria, Auria  
Fight not for name abroad; but come, my husband,  
Fight for thy wife at home!

How poorly some, tame to their wild desires,  
Fawn on abuse of virtue! pray, my lord,  
Make not your house my prison.

(II.iv.42)

At this point Aurelio forces open the door and bursts into the bed-chamber. Naturally he puts the worst construction on the scene before him, and naturally he communicates his interpretation to Auria who has just returned with glory and honors from his victories.

The meeting of Auria and Aurelio is of central importance in determining the character of the husband. Miss Cochnower thinks Auria an ideal character;<sup>194</sup> Oliver, of course, does not. There is certainly validity in Auria's reaction. First he is angry, but not violently so, with Aurelio; then he speaks wearily of his own troubles and fondly of his wife who has disappeared, not having been seen since the night of her discomfiture in Adurni's house. Aurelio is much dissatisfied with his friend's rhapsody and urges revenge, only to be rebuked as Auria defends both his wife and Adurni (this passage is very fine):





Then with a justice lawful as the magistrate's  
 Might I have drawn my sword against Adurni,  
 Which now is sheath'd and rusted in the scabbard,  
 Good thanks to your cheap providence!--Once more  
 I make demand--my wife!--you,--sir--

(III.iii.57-58)

But Aurelio does not wilt before this blast--what he did, he did in friendship and would do again. Now Auria relents--the friend has passed his trial. Aurelio may be wrong, but he is wrong with a clear conscience. I believe this is the proper way to look at the scene. Auria is never, not even in the passage beginning "But my Spinella, trembling on her knee," truly convinced of his wife's guilt. This scene is a trial of Aurelio's faith, and Auria uses different assaults to probe that faith--the supposition of his wife's guilt was but one of his methods. This is one of the most subtly imagined scenes in all of Ford.

Adurni, who was genuinely impressed by Spinella's honesty and who has vowed all along that he will not see her wrongfully slandered, comes before Auria and is received, not with a show of jealous fury but with a cordial greeting. Auria even offers to allow Adurni to dismiss Aurelio if his presence is not demanded. It seems that Auria, whatever his suspicions may be, is no victim of the tortures of jealousy. He wants to hear what Adurni has to say, and several times he keeps Aurelio from interrupting the young man's story. What Adurni says is very interesting:

I found a woman good,--a woman good!  
 Yet, as I wish belief, or do desire  
 A memorable mention, so much majesty  
 Of humbleness and scorn appear'd at once  
 In fair, in chaste, in wise Spinella's eyes,  
 That I grew dull in utterance, and one frown  
 From her cool'd every flame of sensual appetite.

(IV.ii.80-81)

When Adurni completes his confession, the conversation takes some interesting turns:

Auria: Who can you think I am? did you expect  
 So great a tameness as you find, Adurni.  
 That you cast loud defiance? say--  
 Adurni: I've robb'd you  
 Of rigour, Auria, by my strict self-pennance  
 For the presumption.  
 Auria: Sure, Italians hardly  
 Admit dispute in question of this nature;  
 The trick is new.  
 Adurni: I find my absolution  
 By vows of change from all ignoble practice.  
 Auria: Why, look ye, friend, I told you this before;  
 You would not be persuaded.

(IV.i.82)

This last speech is directed to Aurelio, of course. And Auria is right; earlier he had said that Spinella's constancy would have both checked and corrected the folly of any who attempted to dishonour her (III.ii.56).

Now Adurni has passed his trial--just as Aurelio did his. But their stories conflict, and Spinella must therefore defend herself in her own trial because she has not observed the caution given her by Auria in the opening scene and kept herself out of a compromising situation. The lady must stand trial.

Auria steps aside to think what he should do, and

having hit upon a plan leaves to meet Spinella, whose whereabouts has just at this moment been made known to him by Trelcatio, a citizen of Genoa, to whose home she has come.

The lady's trial occurs in the last scene of the play. When Auria arrives at Trelcatio's house, he greets everyone by name except his wife, to whom he says,

But who's that other? such a face mine eyes  
Have been acquainted with; the sight resembles  
Something which is not quite lost to remembrance.

(V.ii.88)

Spinella kneels before her husband but his words have hurt her; and when his next words add to that hurt, she replies with some heat (Ford's women--his virtuous women--never take question of their virtue lightly):

Those words raise  
A lively soul in her, who almost yielded  
To faintness and stupidity; I thank ye:  
Though prove what judge you will, till I can purge  
Objections which require belief and conscience,  
I have no kindred, sister, husband, friend,  
Or pity for my plea.

(V.ii.88)

Spinella, like the Queen of Arragon, is scorned in her innocence. The superiority of this situation over that of The Queen is readily apparent.

The dialectic is begun. One lengthy passage must be noted. Auria addresses his wife:

behold these hairs,  
Great masters of a spirit, yet they are not  
By winter of old age quite hid in snow;  
Some messengers of time, I must acknowledge.

Amongst them took up lodging; when we first  
 Exchang'd our faiths in wedlock, I was proud  
 I did prevail with one whose youth and beauty  
 Deserv'd a choice more suitable in both.  
 Advancement to a fortune could not court  
 Ambition either on my side or hers;  
 Love drove the bargain, and the truth of love  
 Confirm'd it, I conceiv'd. But disproportion  
 In years amongst the married is a reason  
 For change of pleasures: whereto I reply,  
 Our union was not forc'd, 'twas by consent;  
 So then the breach in such a case appears  
 Unpardonable:--say your thoughts.

(V.ii.90)

Gifford calls this speech "exquisitely beautiful,"<sup>195</sup> and it  
 is very fine. Spinella answers:

My thoughts  
 In that respect are resolute as yours;  
 The same: yet herein evidence of frailty  
 Deserv'd not more a separation  
 Than doth charge of disloyalty objected  
 Without or ground or witness: women's faults  
 Subject to punishments and men's applauded  
 Prescribe no law in force.

(V.ii.90-91)

Spinella still has her spirit. She wonders about the difference between the social laws for men and those for women (Ford was in some respects ahead of his time, and those writers who link him with Ibsen and the problem play do so with justice). Even Aurelio is impressed with her reasoning: "Are ye so nimble?"

Now Adurni, evidently in accord with Auria's plan, enters and volunteers to defend Spinella. Auria pretends to be enraged, and then Spinella's strength finally gives way:

Sister,  
Lend me thine arm; I have assum'd a courage  
Above my force, and can hold out no longer.---  
Auria, unkind, unkind!

As she begins to swoon, Auria calls off his trial:

Spinella!  
Regent of my affections, thou hast conquer'd:  
I find thy virtues as I left them, perfect,  
Pure, and unflaw'd:

(V.ii.92)

As proof of his trust he offers Castana, the sister of Spinella, to Adurni in marriage. This is the fruition of the plan he had conceived at the end of the fourth act. But even so, and even though Adurni says

The motion Lady,  
To me, I can assure you, is not sudden,  
But welcom'd and forethought

(V.ii.92)

The proposal is too sudden and carries little conviction. When Spinella urges her sister not to "Reject the use of fate" and Castana answers, "I dare not question/The will of heaven" (V.ii.93), we can only conclude that there seems to be little of either fate or heaven in the marriage. However, the alteration in Adurni's character has been carefully motivated and delineated: we may assume that he is a fitting husband for Castana now.

The subplot contrasts with the main love story. Martino corresponds to Aurelio. He suspects his niece, Levidolche of being a wanton, and he is perfectly correct. She attempts to draw Malfato, the cousin of Spinella, to her

favours, but he furiously rejects her suit. Thus, in the subplot the situation is reversed: it is the woman who tempts virtue and the man who remains constant.

The characters of this subplot are shown to advantage. Martino is not fooled by his niece's protests of her innocence in II.ii. He knows she has been Adurni's lover, and he speaks to her as she deserves. Often some of Ford's minor characters are rendered memorable by a single scene. This is true of Sir William Stanley in II.ii. of Perkin Warbeck; it is true in a slightly lesser sense of Martino in II.ii. of The Lady's Trial.

Levidolche, the vengeful wanton, is a good dramatic character in the opening scene, but later her portrait is weakened by the incredibility of her ex-husband's failure to recognize her and govern his actions accordingly.

Ford does give Benatzi, her divorced husband, one noble speech in the play. Standing in his rags and tatters, the ex-soldier, just returned from Auria's war, says: "I have wrestled with death, Signor Martino, to preserve your sleeps, and such as you are, untroubled. A soldier is in peace a mockery, a very town-bull for laughter; unthrifths and landed babies are prey curmudgeons lay their baits for. Let the wars rattle about your ears once, and the security of a soldier is right honourable amongst you then; that day may shine again" (V.i.84).

Malfato is a melancholic, discontented young man.

Aurelio, his friend as well as Auria's, guesses that he is in love, and so it proves to be. In refutation of the adverse criticism of 'Tis Pity which emphasizes Ford's condonation of incest, Malfato's explanation of his melancholy to Spinella seems significant (the italics are mine):

Listen

To a strange tale, which thus the author sigh'd.  
 A kinsman of Spinella,--so it runs,--  
 Her father's sister's son, some time before  
 Auria, the fortunate, possess'd her beauties,  
 Became enamour'd of such rare perfections  
 As she was stor'd with; fed his idle hopes  
 With possibilities of lawful conquest;  
 Propos'd each difficulty in pursuit  
 Of what his vain supposal styl'd his own;  
 Found in the argument one only flaw  
 Of conscience, by the nearness of their bloods,--  
Unhappy scruple, easily dispens'd with,  
 Had any friend's advice resolv'd the doubt.  
 Still on he lov'd and lov'd, and wish'd and wish'd;  
 Eftsoon began to speak, yet soon broke off,  
 And still the fondling durst not,--'cause he durst not.

(IV.i.65)

That use of repetition in the last line is one of the finest in all Ford's writing.

The mainplot of The Lady's Trial has one possible fault. Although Auria's jealousy and fears are aroused by Aurelio, he is never really convinced of his wife's guilt. And when Adurni confesses, he has no other need to doubt her honor. Yet he uses her harshly in the final scene. This can perhaps be explained, for the conflicting stories of Aurelio and Adurni necessitate the lady's standing in her own defense. Yet the degree of his harshness seems unnatural in a man of his character.

One of the faults of the play is a general Elizabethan failing, the poor handling of the passage of time implied between acts. Auria leaves for the war, conquers, gains honors, and returns--all in too rapid a period of time. This sometimes makes the action implausible. But then this fault is not Ford's alone--Marlowe, Shakespeare, and the other Elizabethans all fell victim to it at one time or another.

The play has one glaring error. The soldier Benatzi returns home from Auria's war under a different name and clothed in such rags that they amount almost to a disguise. Even so, his ex-wife identifies him immediately. Yet he never recognizes Levidolche, even though she appears without disguise and uses her real name. The pair have been divorced and presumably long separated from each other--perhaps this is intended to explain the problem, but it does not do so (and the brevity of Auria's war, for which Benatzi left home, again does nothing to aid belief).

The Lady's Trial has been frequently praised, frequently condemned. "Scarcely any merit is discoverable in this play beyond the even excellence of most of the diction and versification," was Ward's surprisingly harsh view.<sup>196</sup> His American counterpart as a historian of the stage disagreed with him; Schelling thought it "a comedy of genuine excellence, power, and literary worth."<sup>197</sup> Most later critics have concentrated their attention on the main plot



and dismissed the substructures. Oliver, Leech, and a good many others have judged the Auria-Spinella plot to be of considerable worth.<sup>198</sup>

The Lady's Trial is neither the best nor the worst of Ford's plays. It does have at least two, and perhaps three, rather disconcerting faults, but here and there are moments which approach the pathos of The Broken Heart and other moments which have something of the poetry and dignity of The Lover's Melancholy and Perkin Warbeck. Despite its faults this late comedy, the poet's last work for the stage, represents Ford's art at a point near its best, and The Lady's Trial is on the whole a very successful play.

The success of The Lady's Trial is in its mainplot, which is almost superb. The poetry which Ford has given his characters is always excellent and frequently exquisite. And the characters themselves are finely drawn: Auria, Spinella, and Aurelio are not the stock figures of the comedy of intrigue. The temperate husband, the chaste but spirited wife, and the fierce but honest friend are new personages on the English stage; nor is Adurni really the stock character of the seductive lover. Yet one critic judges that "the characters are hopelessly artificial and stereotyped. Aurelio is the usual faithful friend; Adorni [sic] the usual licentious lover; Spinella the inevitable injured heroine; and Auria the equally inevitable jealous husband."<sup>199</sup> This ridiculous statement, as much as any of

his other absurdities (including his failure to know Ford's name--he calls him Thomas), disqualifies Allardyce Nicoll as a critic of Ford. The play has its faults, but they most certainly do not consist of artificial and stereotyped characters.

Concerning the direction of Ford's art evident in The Lady's Trial, Oliver has a very interesting statement. It will be remembered that when Adurni confessed his attempted seduction of Spinella to Auria, he said that he had robbed Auria of vengeance "by my strict self-penance." Auria commented that in questions of illicit affairs Italians admitted no other course but vengeance and concluded by saying "The trick is new" (IV.i.82). Concerning Auria's decision not to take bloody revenge on Adurni, Oliver says:

The trick is new. One might almost say that it is Ford's particular contribution to Jacobean drama. Auria is a Hamlet without even Hamlet's sudden bursts of energy. In Love's Sacrifice Ford had worked within the limits of the Elizabethan tragedy of blood; but here, at the end of his career in The Lady's Trial, the wife really is innocent, the friend disinterested and the husband has some judgment; and it becomes apparent that, in spite of the occasional violence of action in his earlier plays, Ford never was interested in the tragedy of blood. He was not interested in murders; in fact he was not particularly interested in what people do. His concern was with what they think and feel. But to make a play only from what people think and feel is to strain drama to its utmost limits. As Professor Ellis-Fermor has suggested, Ford had reached the very frontiers of drama.<sup>200</sup>

The hyperbole of "strain," "utmost limits" and "very frontiers" romanticizes the situation considerably; and of course Auria

does have energy of a sort (we have some of the sword-pulling of Beaumont and Fletcher's The Maid's Tragedy here). Nonetheless, the drift of the statement is true. We do not need to single out The Lady's Trial, Ford's last published play, to see that Ford was more interested in thoughts and emotions than in action. The fact is evident in his first published play, The Lover's Melancholy, and in Perkin Warbeck, where there is some action, but none of the "long jars" which offended Jonson and which were typical of early history plays. Furthermore, in The Broken Heart, it is really "the silent griefs which cut the heart-strings," not the bloody deaths of Ithocles and Orgilus, which are of greatest interest to Ford. Blood had been shown on the English stage before; something of the "silent griefs" had perhaps been attempted in Thomas Heywood's A Woman Killed with Kindness but not often elsewhere. Ford does, then, represent the end of the dramatic age begun by Marlowe and Kyd. From Tamburlaine and Hieronymo to Auria is a distance of more than mere years.

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<sup>5</sup>Frederick S. Boas, An Introduction to Stuart Drama (London, 1946), p. 338.

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 457.

<sup>37</sup>Stuart Pratt Sherman, "A New Play by Ford," Modern Language Notes, XXIII (1909), 245-249.

<sup>38</sup>H. Dugdale Sykes, "John Ford's Posthumous Play 'The Queen'" in Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama (New York, 1924), p. 175.

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>43</sup>Sykes, p. 181.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 176-177.

<sup>45</sup>Bentley, III, 458.

<sup>46</sup>Bang, p. 46.

<sup>47</sup>Sykes, p. 182.

<sup>48</sup>This passage prompts G. F. Sensabaugh to say, "Ford burnt incense before beautiful women with even more awe than votaries in court"--see The Tragic Muse of John Ford, p. 162. The assertion is incorrect. Alphonso kneels in repentance rather than adoration.

<sup>49</sup>Sykes, pp. 181-182.

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- 92 Kaufman, p. 366, has said that the entire first act "has such a neat economy of attack, such a rare directness, that it argues Ford's confident impatience to give body to a world he sees rising before him."
- 93 Nicoll, p. 193.
- 94 Sensabaugh, Tragic Muse, p. 159.
- 95 Parrott and Ball, p. 246.
- 96 I am aware that both of these characters have been criticized for imperfections, but in neither case do the faults amount to sins.



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<sup>144</sup>Struble, p. 27.

<sup>145</sup>Donald K. Anderson, Jr., "Kingship in Ford's Perkin Warbeck," Journal of English Literary History, xxvii (September, 1960), 184.

<sup>146</sup>Henry Wells, Elizabethan and Jacobean Playwrights (New York, 1939), p. 106.

<sup>147</sup>The modern reader could read this scene as praise of Perkin's sensitivity and humility. That this is not the case is indicated by the historical sources Ford used--this scene is in truth a deprecation of Perkin. See Struble, p. 144.

<sup>148</sup>Schelling, Elizabethan Drama, p. 216.

<sup>149</sup>Cecil, p. 115.

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<sup>152</sup>Ward, III, 85.

<sup>153</sup>Harbage, "The Mystery of Perkin Warbeck," p. 135.

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<sup>155</sup>Ibid., pp. 130-132.

<sup>156</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>157</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>158</sup>See Gifford-Dyce, I, lxxxv.

<sup>159</sup>Bentley, III, 456. Part of his information is based on a theory of Joseph Quincy Adams.

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- 166 S. Blaine Ewing, Burtonian Melancholy in the Plays of John Ford, Princeton Studies in English, XIX (Princeton, 1940), p. 29.
- 167 Ibid., p. 28.
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- 169 Ewing, pp. 28-30.
- 170 Bentley, III, 444.
- 171 Ibid., pp. 30-32. The prologue is reproduced as found in Ewing, pp. 30-31, since the Gifford-Dyce edition lacks some of the capitalization and italicization of Ewing's version.
- 172 Schelling, Elizabethan Drama, II, 297.
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- 192 R. J. Kaufman, "Ford's Tragic Perspective" in Elizabethan Drama, ed. R. J. Kaufman (New York, 1961), p. 365.
- 193 Oliver, p. 117.
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## CHAPTER VII

### JOHN FORD AND THE CRITICS

Although the nineteenth century resurrected the works of the all but forgotten dramatist John Ford, it claimed not to admire the writings it had recovered from oblivion. But to say that those writings were condemned is not to say that they were not read. The poetry of Ford seemed to hold a kind of fatal fascination for the Victorians. Perhaps they read him because they were amazed that one man could be so bad, but whatever the causes of Ford's popularity may have been, the strange fact remains that one of the most widely read of all the Elizabethan poets in the nineteenth century was the "high priest of decadence," John Ford.

Probably it was Charles Lamb's Specimens which made Ford prominent enough for the booksellers to be interested in a collected edition of his works; they hired Henry Weber to edit the poet and published his two-volume collection in 1811. William Gifford found a great many faults in Weber's work and published his own edition in 1827. Before the end of the century seven more complete editions were put before the public as proof of Ford's growing popularity. Weber's collection was re-issued in America in 1831. In 1840 Hartley Coleridge printed Ford's plays together with Massinger's, and this volume was reprinted in 1848 and 1850.

A German translation of Ford appeared in 1860 (and about this time the dramatist was becoming known in France). The Reverend Alexander Dyce re-edited and added some further notes to Gifford's efforts in 1869, and a new issue of this Gifford-Dyce edition was thought necessary by 1895, when A. H. Bullen reprinted it. Seven complete editions of Ford's plays in England alone, not to mention the American and German printings and the select edition of five plays prepared by Havelock Ellis in 1888, give ample evidence of the fact that the nineteenth century had a considerable private interest in the immoral pagan whom it publicly damned.<sup>1</sup>

Comparison of this information with the dates of the first editions of the complete works of other leading dramatic writers of the Elizabethan age re-emphasizes that Ford was exceedingly popular reading in the romantic and Victorian eras. Weber's original edition of Ford preceded by fifteen years the first complete collection of the plays of a rather well-known early Elizabethan playwright-- Christopher Marlowe. A year after Marlowe's works appeared Gifford had the second edition of Ford ready for the press. The initial volume of the plays of George Peele was printed in 1828, and the series was complete by 1839. In the meantime the works of John Webster and Robert Greene were collected for the first times, in 1830 and 1831 respectively. In 1840 the initial printing of the plays of Thomas Middleton

appeared--by this year the fourth edition of Ford was underway. The works of Thomas Heywood were printed between 1842 and 1851. Thomas Dekker was not represented by a collected edition until 1873. Four years before that date the sixth English edition of Ford had appeared, and a seventh was to be deemed necessary before the end of the century.<sup>2</sup>

I do not know of any poet who has provoked such violent disagreement among critics as has Ford. The most extreme viewpoints were stated in the most famous of the early nineteenth century evaluations of the poet's work, the essays of Lamb and Hazlitt. Few, if any, writers have gotten more publicity for fewer words than Charles Lamb did for his commentary on Ford. If all of his writings on the poet were combined, they would amount to little more than a page, yet no student of the dramatist can afford to overlook Lamb's eulogy on The Broken Heart and the furor of dissent which it produced. Lamb's linking of Calantha's death scene with the passion on Golgotha, whether it is right or wrong, has done more harm than good to the reputation of the poet he so greatly admired. William Hazlitt was as extreme in his attack on Ford and The Broken Heart as Lamb was in his praise, and many of the viewpoints of later critics of the century were merely expansions of the ideas set forth in these early works.

Among the late Romantic and the Victorian critics are a few whose work is especially significant in the study



of John Ford. The commentaries of the editors are valuable--especially Gifford's. His introduction contains a general criticism of the works, which is amply and ably expanded by extensive observations in the footnotes to the works themselves. Coleridge has an occasional interesting or enlightening thought, but on the whole he is less valuable than Gifford.

Swinburne's essay on Ford in The Fortnightly Review in 1871 is an indispensable examination of the plays, and it also contains some interesting comments on the minor non-dramatic works, some of the very few of such comments which the century has to offer. Swinburne was ecstatic in his praise of Ford, but he also noted the dramatist's faults as he saw them. The essay has a fair balance of favorable and adverse criticism. George Saintsbury called Swinburne's work on Ford "one of the most brilliant of his prose essays;" and to my mind it is, despite its exaggeration, the most significant study of the Elizabethan poet which the nineteenth century produced.<sup>3</sup>

Saintsbury's own essay on Ford is highly worthwhile. He treated most of the works too summarily--for instance, he dismissed Perkin Warbeck as an "essai pale et noble"--and concentrated on 'Tis Pity and The Broken Heart (but then most Victorian writers on Ford did the same). Saintsbury confessed to having read Ford several times, and though he criticizes the poet severly on occasion, his appreciation for him is

fully evident. He called Ford's faults the faults of the age and said that if he had been born twenty years earlier Ford would have been second only to Shakespeare in the drama. Saintsbury's style, like that of Swinburne, sweeps the reader along, and if he said little that had not been said before, he did at least say it with new and seemingly vital emphasis.<sup>4</sup>

The work of A. W. Ward is also immensely valuable.<sup>5</sup> Ward's essay is carefully organized, and his comments are as thorough as the brevity required in a literary history would allow. His approach is always sane and sensible and his essay is far more cautiously worded than that of Saintsbury. Even when we are inclined to disagree with his conclusions, we can usually see the reasons why he could feel as he did. In the sense that there is a norm in Victorian criticism of Ford, Ward may be fairly taken as representative of the golden mean.

The lack of critical concord evident in English criticism of Ford is also found among the chief nineteenth century French historians of English literature. H. A. Taine discussed only Ford's two greatest tragedies, but he had great admiration for the dramatist's powers in tragedy and for his insight into human souls. Of the scene in which Annabella sings as Soranzo drags her around the room by her hair, demanding the name of her lover, Taine's comment is-- "so like a woman." He understood Penthea. Of her love and death, he wrote: Love here is not despotic, passionate. . .

It is only deep and sad; the source of life is dried up, that is all; she lives no longer because she cannot. . . I know nothing in the drama more pure and touching."<sup>6</sup> From Taine to J. J. Jusserand is roughly the distance from Lamb to Hazlitt. In Jusserand's opinion Ford made horror his speciality: "we are kept knee-deep in mud" was his final comment on Ford's tragic art.<sup>7</sup>

American writers in the nineteenth century were not very much interested in Ford. The dramatist received little attention and far less praise. James Russell Lowell professed that he had once been an admirer of Ford, but later he delivered one of the most vituperative denunciations of him which an age of vituperation was able to produce. His attack in The Old English Dramatists may be taken as the pièce de résistance of early American criticism of Ford.

The situation changed abruptly in the early years of the twentieth century. Ford's greatest champion was American. Stuart Pratt Sherman's work as editor of the two great tragedies is invaluable for the introduction which it contains, and his essay entitled "Ford's Contribution to the Decadence of the Drama" is, despite its title, a fresh evaluation of Ford.<sup>8</sup> After noting that all critics from Gifford on had judged Ford "as if by necessity with their whole characters," he proceeded to judge the dramatist in the same way.<sup>9</sup> Although he emphasized Ford's decadence, finding him an opponent of the moral order, Sherman admired

Ford greatly; and his work is the first since Swinburne's that criticism cannot do without. Sherman was not, I think, the first critic to point out that Ford's plays were problem plays; but he emphasized the fact and used it to Ford's advantage. For the first time Love's Sacrifice received noteworthy attention--not even Swinburne had been able to overcome his moral dissatisfaction sufficiently to treat the play fairly. But Sherman saw Love's Sacrifice as a problem play treating "the most popular theme of modern literature, 'elective affinities' disturbing the state of marriage;" and he noted that it was "with a deeply searching mind" that Ford "probes the mystery of passion and presents a study in sex psychology unequalled and unapproached in the drama of his predecessors and his contemporaries." He firmly believed the tragedy to be decadent, but he noted that "it is tragedy of just this sort that fascinated Goethe in Die Wahlverwandtschaften, Tolstoy in Anna Karenina, Ibsen in Rosmersholm, Hauptmann in Einsame Menschen. . . .and Maeterlinck in Alladine and Palomides;" and he concluded that "Across the centuries Ford clasps hands with the most modern of the moderns."<sup>10</sup> After Sherman wrote, the modernity of Ford began to be stressed more and more, his decadence less and less. Sherman was the first "specialist" in Ford and his works have had a lasting influence.

Felix Schelling was not a specialist on Ford. He has no separate essays on the dramatist, but his brief

treatments of him in his various histories of the Elizabethan drama are of sufficient value to deserve some slight mention here. In many ways Schelling was a traditionalist, reflecting a great deal of Victorian opinion, but he examined some aspects of the poet's work which had seldom been treated before. After Ward there is no historian of the broad Elizabethan theatrical period who has treated Ford as thoroughly or as fairly as has Schelling.

In the scholarship of the 1930's three women began to notice Ford, and their comments were far different from those of the few Victorian women who had dared to read, and admit in print that they had read, the decadent Ford. Mary Edith Cochnower's study of Ford's thought in the Seventeenth Century Studies prepared by the University of Cincinnati is the first lengthy publication on Ford. Miss Cochnower traces such themes as "Man," "Woman," "Love," "Religion," and "Morality" through the dramatic and non-dramatic works, and her findings are of inestimable value. At times her conclusions regarding the significance of certain statements in Ford and her evaluations of certain aspects of the plays are questionable, but there is no gainsaying the importance of her study.

Two years after Miss Cochnower's monograph appeared in 1933, Miss M. Joan Sargeaunt published the first full length book on Ford. Her work on the biography of Ford, collecting most of the details which we know concerning his

days in the Middle Temple, and her discovery of his authorship of Christ's Bloody Sweat and The Golden Mean are her greatest contributions to Ford scholarship. Her book attempts to cover all the major aspects of her subject's art, and although it is possible to disagree with some of her conclusions, her work is a milestone in the history of Ford studies.

In 1936 another English scholar, Miss Una M. Ellis-Fermor, published an essay on Ford in her book Jacobean Drama. That essay remains one of the most intriguing and perceptive examinations of the dramatist. Miss Ellis-Fermor sees Ford as a man "with a grave and unfaltering faith in the ultimate prevalence of underlying virtue in the universe of mind, robbing them [human sins] of their terror and showing them for what they are, the follies of children on a background of the immutable virtues of courage, continence, and chivalry." In other words, she believes that Ford destroys evil not by showing its overthrow by good, which only partially survives, "but by convincing us that evil never was."<sup>11</sup> Now the question of Ford's moral decadence is no longer the chief theme of criticism: Miss Ellis-Fermor sees him as an idealist, and that is a significant sight. In a period of only three years, three women critics caused a revolution in the world's attitude toward Ford, and the essence of that revolt has not yet been dissipated.

Since 1940 there have been five book length studies

and scores of articles on Ford. In 1940 S. Blaine Ewing's monograph on the importance of Burtonian melancholy in Ford's plays provided valuable insights into an aspect of the plays which was greatly needed. Ewing has proved that every one of the plays is indebted in greater or lesser degree to the science of melancholy, and his work has proven of inestimable value in helping us to understand Ford's purposes in his art and in interpreting his characters. The proof that Giovanni in 'Tis Pity is a victim of both love melancholy and religious melancholy leads to a recognition of his character which was never before possible and which does much to disqualify forever the old criticism that Ford condoned the actions of his incestuous lovers. Ewing's work was followed in 1944 by G. F. Sensabaugh's The Tragic Muse of John Ford, which attempts to prove that Ford was a scientific determinist, that is, a believer in the validity of melancholy as a knowledge of the universal laws which govern human behavior (which he certainly is), and as an "unbridled individualist, that is, a believer in the court doctrines of Platonic Love (which he certainly is not). It has been said that the work of Ewing and Sensabaugh on Ford's indebtedness to Burton represents America's chief contribution to Ford scholarship.<sup>12</sup> Sensabaugh's work is certainly useful for its compilation of quotations having bearing on the relation of Ford to Burton or on the relation of Ford to the Platonic love cult. It is only when he attempts to draw conclusions

from those citations that we are inclined to shake our heads in wonder. As an interpretation of Ford, Sensabaugh's work has many weaknesses.

Three lengthy studies of Ford in the past nine years attest to the dramatist's growing popularity. In 1954, the French critic Robert Davril published his tome Le Drame de John Ford, which remains the most extensive work on the playwright. M. Davril is heavily indebted to Miss Sargeaunt and other recent scholars for much of his information and opinion, but the work does make a substantial original contribution in certain minor areas of Ford's work, and his review of continental criticism of Ford and of the publications, translations, and performances outside of England and America is of great interest. Among other continental writers Mario Praz has had occasion to write on Ford. It is interesting to note that he accepts Lamb's commentary as offering the best insight into the causes of the power and beauty of Ford's works for the stage--"Ford was of the first order of Poets."<sup>13</sup>

Professor H. J. C. Oliver's The Problem of John Ford appeared in 1955. There is not much to quarrel with in this volume, other than the author's propensity to see too much indebtedness to Shakespeare in Ford's plays. Percy Bysshe Shelley and Charles Swinburne were most assuredly wrong when they contended that Shakespeare had had very little influence on Ford,<sup>14</sup> but I feel that Oliver errs also



in claiming too much of Ford to be borrowed. It must be admitted that Oliver has a very open mind on the problem and that in his opinion Ford does not always lose when certain aspects of his plays are compared with Shakespeare's. Oliver's book is limited, but he does have an interesting discussion of the chronology of Ford's plays and also a consideration of certain textual matters. His discussion of the plays is exceptionally valuable, and his comments on the non-dramatic works cannot be disregarded.

Slightly less valuable in my opinion but still noteworthy is the volume John Ford and the Drama of His Time, published by Clifford Leech in 1957. His work owes something to Davril and Oliver, but the title is sufficient to indicate his emphasis, which is new. Leech attempts to see Ford as not only a successor to Shakespeare but also as a contemporary of Shirley and Brome, and in this respect the work is a contribution. Like Oliver's, Leech's work is rather short and space imposes some rather unfortunate limitations on his discussions of the works.

Five books and two monographs in the twenty-five years since Miss Cochnower paved the way indicate the catholicity of Ford's appeal to modern readers. Of those seven works, three are American, two English, one French, and one Australian. It is to such high favor as this that the "high priest of decadence" has risen in the past few years.

At this point mention should be made of Wallace Bacon,

a critic out of his time, whose essay "The Literary Reputation of John Ford" is the most denunciatory of anything written on the poet in decades. Bacon sees Ford as a decadent and finds very little of real worth in his plays. He condemns Ford for his improper themes and for his use of sensation and spectacle. He considers Ford a second-rate poet and a second-rate playwright, and argues that Ford should be considered among the English melodramatists rather than among the tragedians. Happily, Bacon is a voice crying in his own misbegotten wilderness, and crying alone.

The directions which Ford criticism and scholarship must take in the near future seem fairly obvious. Professor Davril has recently published a detailed study of parallels between Shakespeare and Ford in an attempt to fix the extent of the latter's indebtedness. Although I have not yet been able to see the results of his study, I have doubts that the field is exhausted and it seems to me a fruitful area for investigation. The danger is, of course, that some analysts will be too quick to claim too much for Shakespeare--Shelley was partially correct when he said that the similarities between the two were the result of the similarities in the forces of the age.

Those forces themselves could be profitably studied. This work has attempted to deal in small part with Ford's relation to parts of his milieu, but much remains to be

examined. Several years ago John Wilcox pointed out the proximity of the dates of Ford's works and The Doctrine and Discipline of Milton and noted that the atmosphere which produced these examinations of the roles of women in Jacobean and Caroline society should be investigated. This has not yet been done.

In the past few years some interesting and profitable imagery studies of some of Ford's plays have been completed. More are sure to follow, and this could prove a fascinating segment of the scholarship of the sixties.

With few exceptions the minor non-dramatic works are still being ignored. They deserve attention for the value that they have in themselves as literary works, for the evidence they give of Ford's thought during a fourteen-year period of his life, and for the light they throw on the interpretation of his later dramatic works. An important part of my own study has been an examination of these slighted early works, and it is hoped that there will be more investigations of them. In particular, Fame's Memorial is a far better work than has ever been realized and Honor Triumphant is a far different record of Ford's values and thoughts than scholarship has ever discerned. Some new evaluations of the early works is demanded.

This work purports to be a minute examination of all the published works of John Ford. Every area in the criticism of the works has been dealt with in some degree.

Also his political and social milieus have been examined at length on the theory that this new area of study would be valuable in enabling us to see Ford in relation to his times. Unless it is Webster, there is no more intellectual man among the dramatists of Jacobean and Caroline England than John Ford. There is in the plays of Ford evidence of the intelligence of the poet himself, and with that intelligence there is the proof of his great sympathy for humanity. Ford brought a great deal with him into the drama. But he has all too often been criticized as a poet who had little to do with real life, and this view is most assuredly blind. The scene of The Broken Heart may be Sparta, but the heroine of the tragedy is Penelope Devereaux or Frances Coke or a woman who had known the misery that those contemporary Englishwomen knew. Ford certainly deals with real life, and he does so with a knowledge and degree of sympathy unmatched by any other dramatist of his time. John Ford is unquestionably the greatest of the Carolines.

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<sup>2</sup>Shakespeare: The Complete Works, ed. G. B. Harrison (New York, 1952), p. 82.

<sup>3</sup>The essay is reprinted The Complete Works of Algernon Charles Swinburne, ed. Sir Edmund Gosse and Thomas James Wise (New York, 1926), XII, 371-406.

<sup>4</sup>George Saintsbury, A History of Elizabethan Literature (London, 1887).

<sup>5</sup>For the titles of this and all other works not cited in the footnotes, refer to the bibliography.

<sup>6</sup>H. A. Taine, History of English Literature, trans. H. Van Laun (Edinburgh, 1871), I, 408, 425-428.

<sup>7</sup>J. J. Jusserand, A Literary History of the English People (New York, 1909), I, 416, 423.

<sup>8</sup>The essay is reprinted in Stuart Pratt Sherman, Shaping Men and Women (New York, 1928), pp. 203-231.

<sup>9</sup>Sherman, p. 203.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 213-214.

<sup>11</sup>Una M. Ellis-Fermor, Jacobean Drama (London, 1936), pp. 245-246.

<sup>12</sup>H. J. C. Oliver, The Problem of John Ford (Carlton, Victoria), p. 50.

<sup>13</sup>Mario Praz, a review of John Ford by M. Joan Sargeaunt, English Studies XVIII (April, 1936), 85.

<sup>14</sup>Percy Bysshe Shelley, Preface to "Laon and Cythna" in The Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, ed. Roger Ingpen and Walter Peck, New York (1927), p. 244; Swinburne, XII, 371-372.

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## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Howard Lee Ford, son of Grady Thomas Ford and Bonnie Elizabeth Ford, was born at Anna, Texas, on March 22, 1938. He attended elementary schools in Dallas, Texas, where he was graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in January of 1956.

In the following September he enrolled at North Texas State College, receiving the Bachelor of Arts degree in English in June, 1959, and the Master of Arts degree in English in January, 1960. During the fall semester of 1959 he was a teaching fellow in the Department of English; during the spring semester of 1960 he was a research assistant on projects supervised by Professors James Brown and Sumner Ives of the North Texas State faculty.

In the fall of 1960 he entered Louisiana State University, where he was employed for three years as a teaching assistant in the Department of English. He received the Doctor of Philosophy degree from Louisiana State University in August, 1963. He is now Assistant Professor of English at North Texas State University.

## EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Howard Lee Ford

Major Field: English

Title of Thesis: John Ford: The Temple and the Stage

Approved:

W. J. Oline  
Major Professor and Chairman

Max Goodrich  
Dean of the Graduate School

### EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Annette W. Debrau

James T. Nardin

Febrin Guler

Louis P. Simpson

Date of Examination:

July 10, 1963